



The Impact of Memory Café for Caregivers of Persons Living with Dementia in a Teaching Hospital in Singapore

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INTRODUCTION

Globally the number of persons living with dementia (PLWD) is estimated at 55.2 million. In Singapore, 1 in 10 people >60 live with Dementia (1).

PLWD require full time care which are rendered by their family members. Caregivers are often called the second patient and they live with heavy mental and physical strain (2).

Psychological support reduces caregiver burden but having support from peers who have similar experience may be more beneficial.

METHODOLOGY

The authors explored the impact of a Memory Café in an acute hospital setting for caregivers of PLWD, on a monthly basis. Participants were all caregivers of PLWD.

The caregivers start each session with a quick self introduction, followed by sharing their caregiving journeys, art and craft, exercise and Virtual Reality allowing the caregivers to understand and experience the world as lived by the PLWD (Fig.1-4)

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect feedback from caregivers who attended the peer support meetings at Memory Café.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



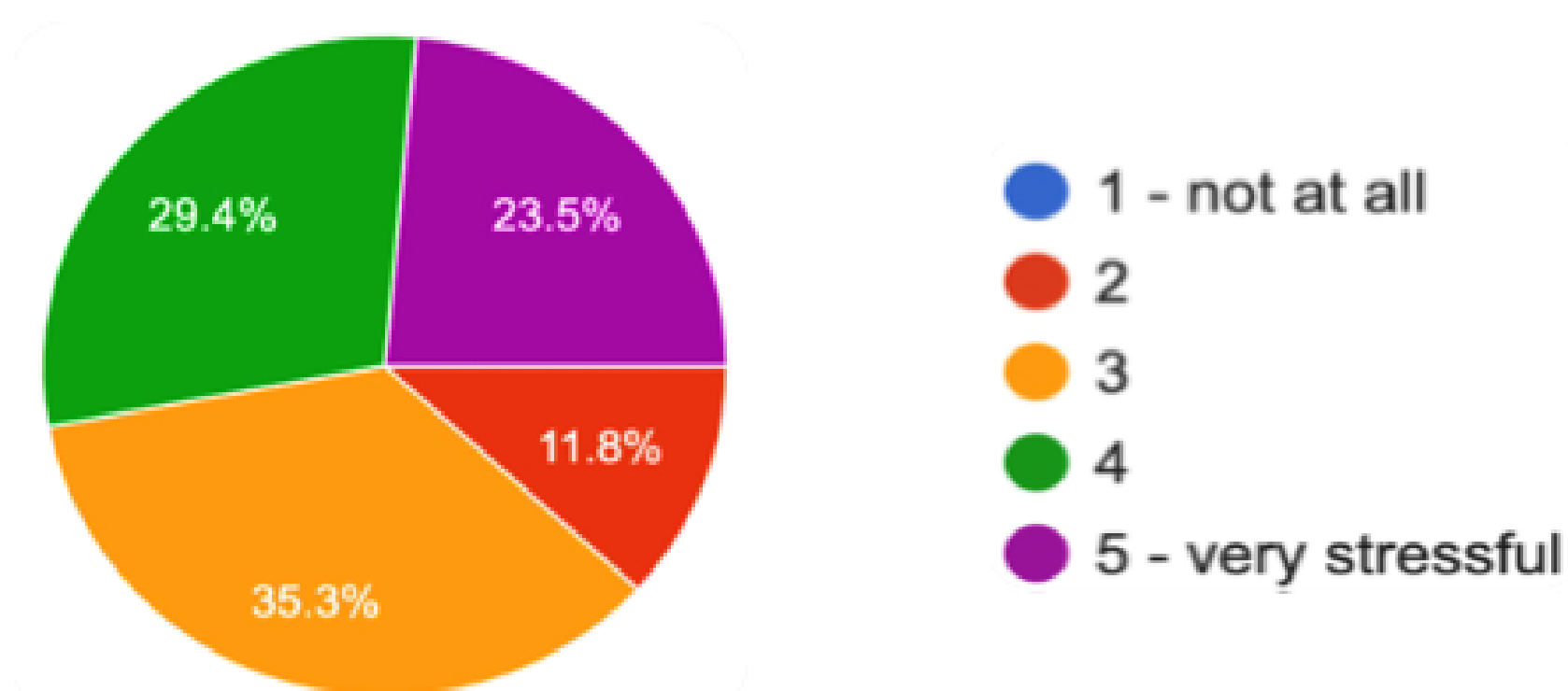
RESULTS

More than one third (36.3%) of caregivers reported being moderately stressed, feeling alone and helpless in caring for their loved ones with dementia, especially on coping with the PLWDs' behavioural symptoms at homes.

Majority reported the peer support group were helpful (76.5%), enjoyable (82.4%), thus wanted more of such sessions (76.5%) and were willing to meet up with other caregivers to share ideas and strategies to manage dementia related problems (58.8%). Caregivers reported being comfortable sharing their experiences and >80% would recommend the sessions to other caregivers (Figure 5-10).

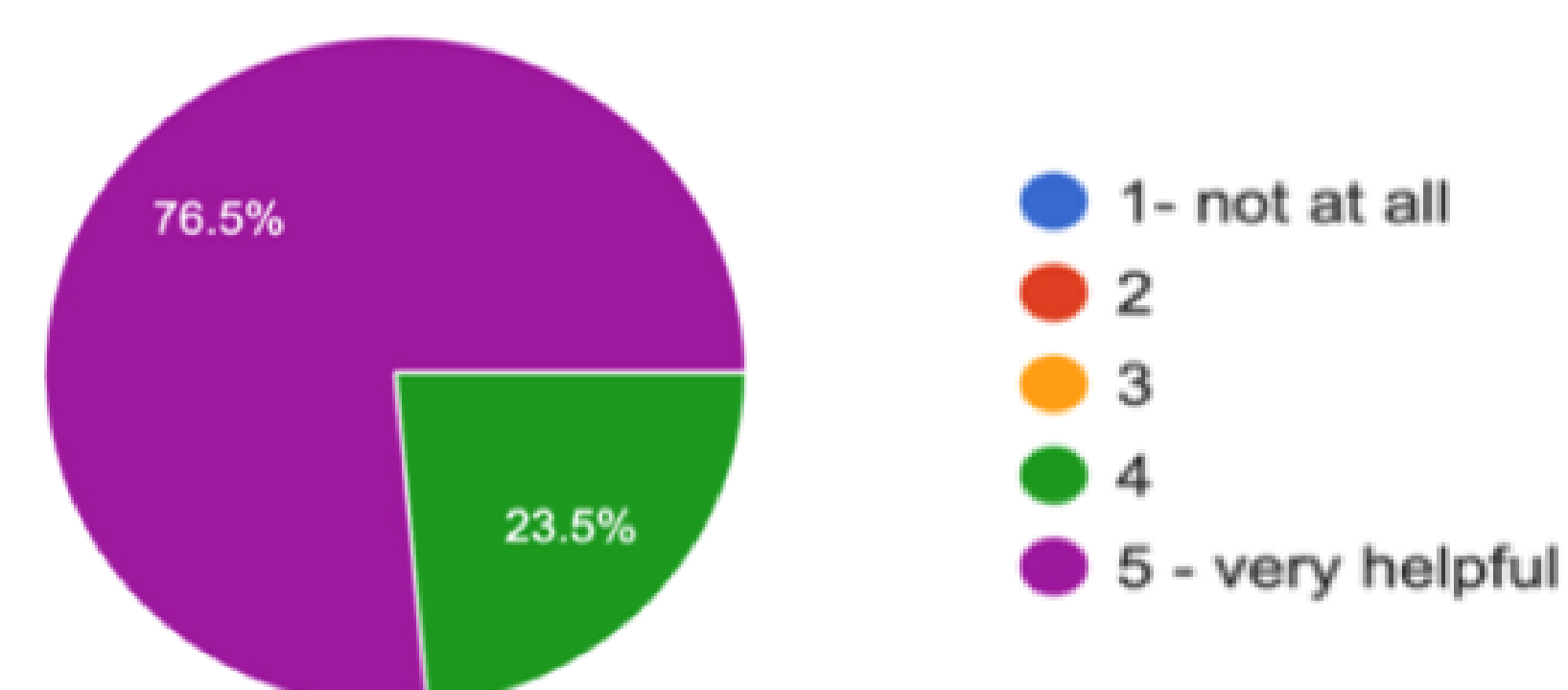
On the scale of 1-5, on average, how stressful would you grade your day in caring for your loved one living with dementia? – 17 responses

Figure 5



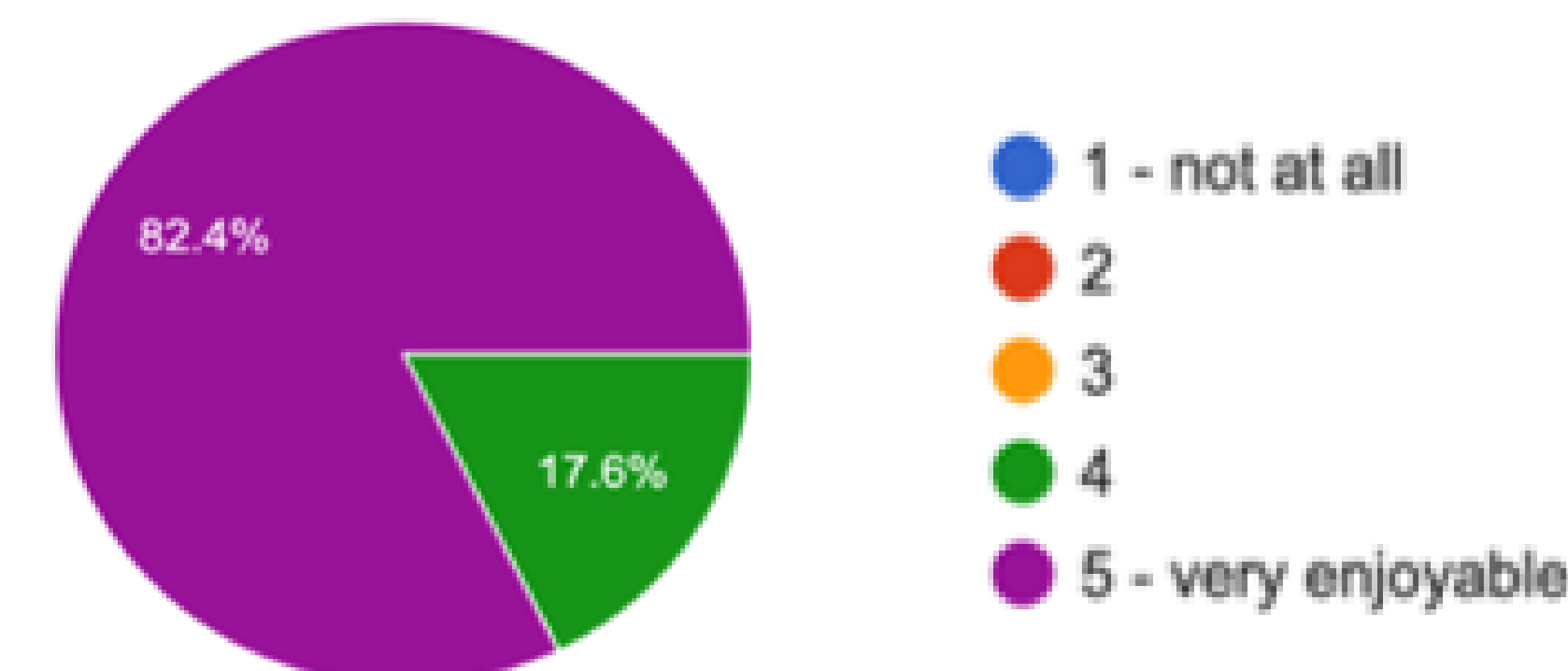
On the scale of 1-5, how helpful was this session? – 17 Responses

Figure 6



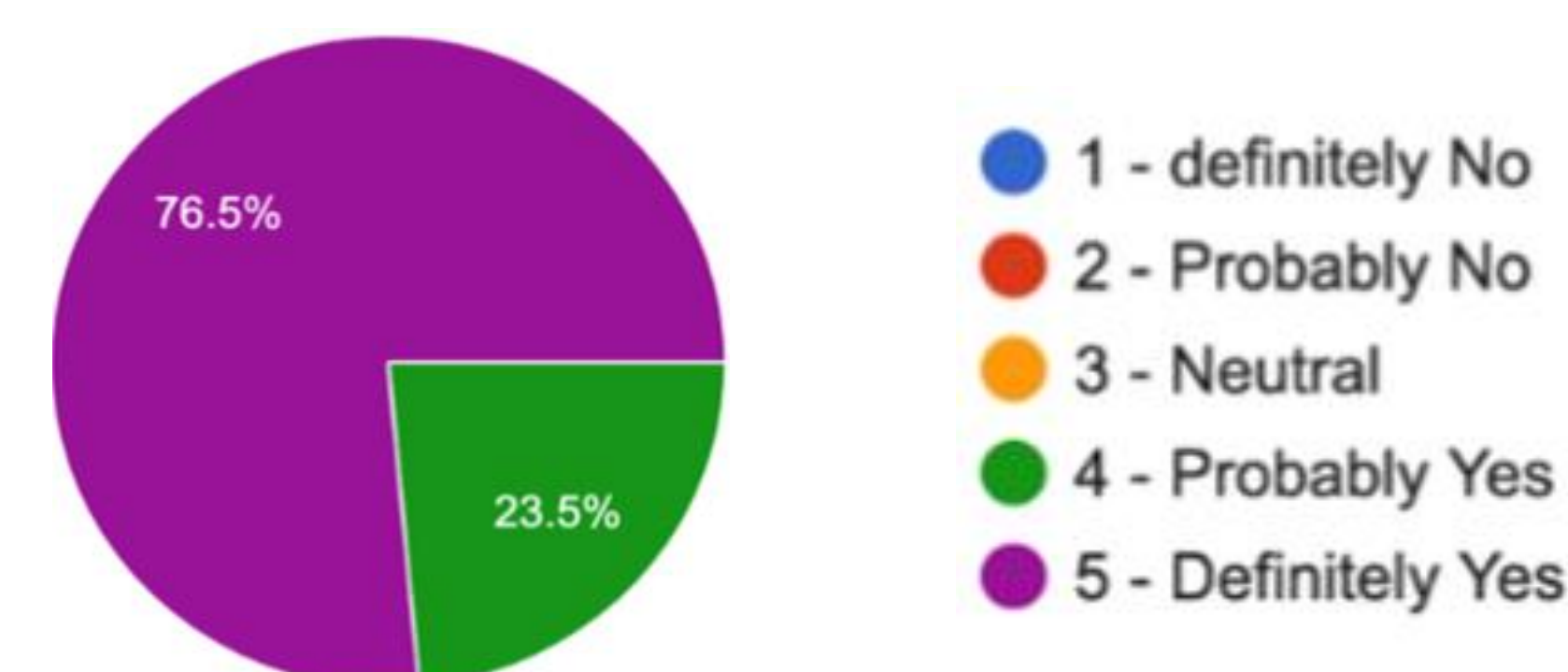
On the scale of 1-5, did you enjoy yourself during this session? – 17 Responses

Figure 7



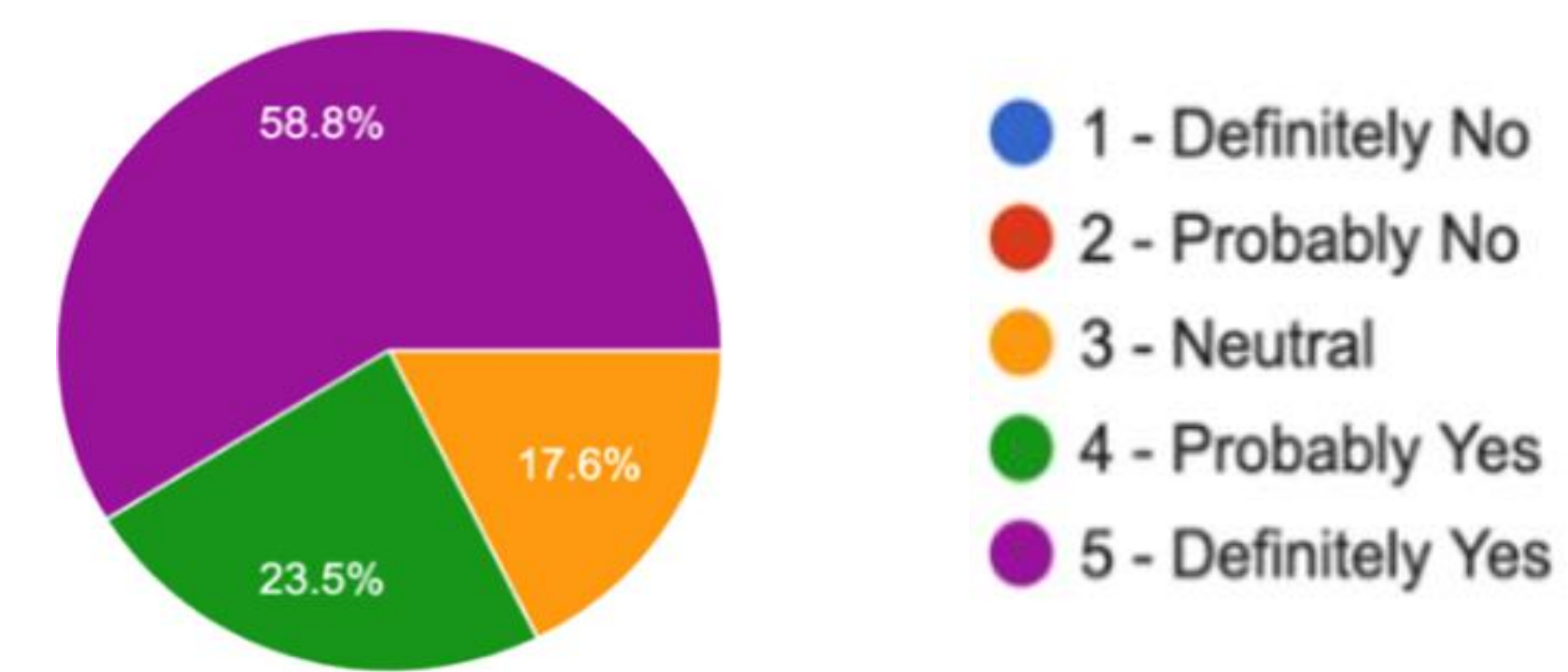
Would you want to have more of such sessions? – 17 Responses

Figure 8



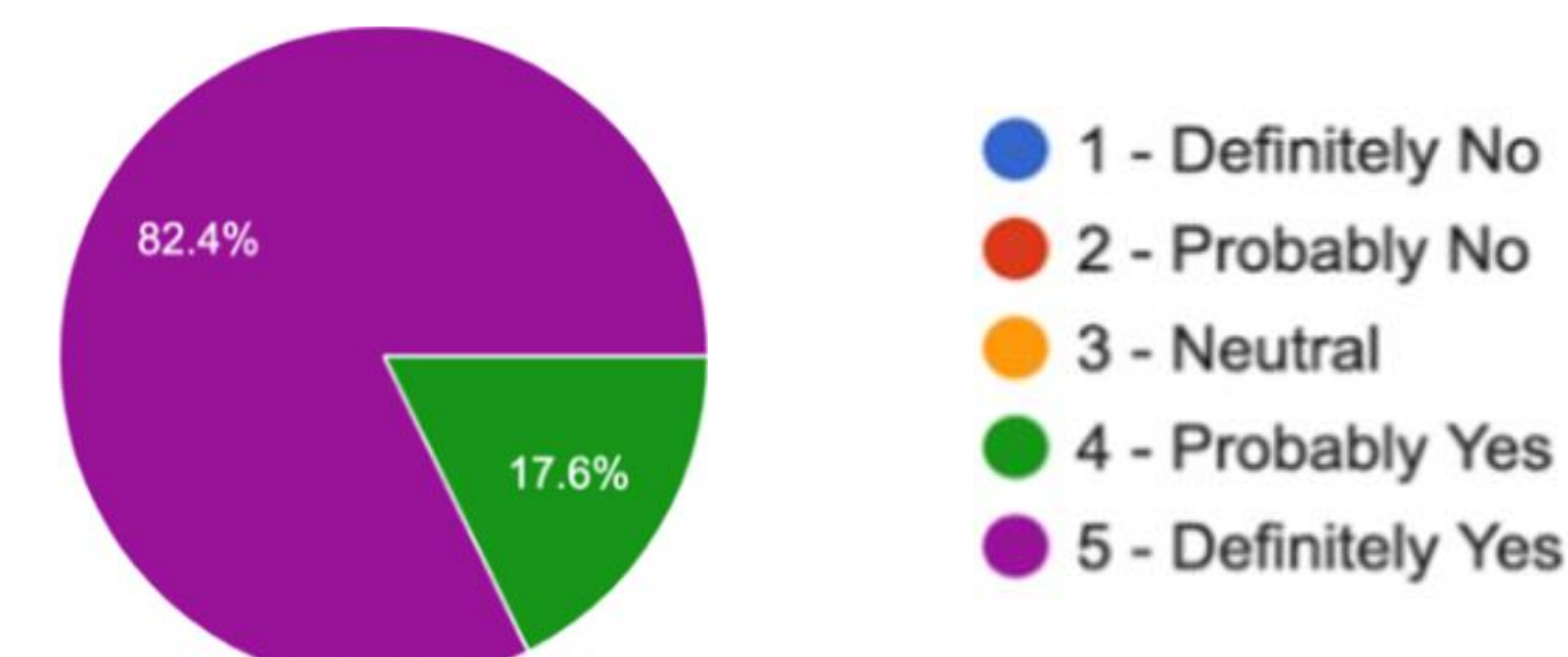
Would you make arrangements with other caregivers to meet up more often to share ideas and strategies to manage various dementia related problems? – 17 Responses

Figure 9



Would you recommend these sessions to other caregivers of dementia? – 17 Responses

Figure 10



CONCLUSIONS

Memory Café provided a good platform for caregivers to get to know other peers, shared their experiences and enabled them to support each other on their caregiving journey with their loved ones living with dementia; in order to prevent burn out and institutionalization.

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