



# EARLY STAGE MEMORY LOSS: COMMUNITY INNOVATIONS

Elder-Friendly Futures Conference 2015

Cayce Cheairs



# MOMENTIA

A social movement transforming what it means to live with memory loss through empowerment and engagement in the community

# EMPOWERMENT

## Community Members

- Listen...
  - Voices of community members
  - Input and feedback
  - Requires openness, flexibility, and new ways of listening

## Community Partners

- Collaborate...
  - Partnerships across the community
  - Community strengths and resources



## A COMMUNITY FORUM MODEL

### Southeast Seattle Community Gathering in 2013

- 9 Community Members- living with memory loss and care partners
- 4 Community Partners:



Three Dementia-friendly programs:

DRUM CIRCLE, URBAN FARMING, and MOMENTIA CELEBRATION at the Royal Room

# ENGAGEMENT

Opportunities in the community to...

- **CONNECT**
- be **Active**
- be **Creative**
- **Give Back**



Camp Momentia

## Out & About Walking Group



Developed and led by Nancy & Steve Olsen

## Arts in the Park with Elderwise



Art Walks



Watercolor Painting

# Volunteering with Seattle Tilth





# EARLY STAGE MEMORY LOSS

- Community Service
- Leadership
- Activism
- Peer Support



## Faces of Memory Loss

"Having Alzheimer's is an adventure, not a disease." -Jim

"I have a happy life. I love my bike riding very much. I enjoy being around people, and have a great daughter and wife." -Chris

"Alzheimer's is nothing to fear. I am a loving person; I am a happy person. I have fun, friends, and family, and that gives me joy." -CeCe

"We still have the capacity to love and cherish our families. I thank my family for all they do." -Helene

"I'm a strong person. I can do a lot of things, and I do a lot of things. I'm not just whistling dixie!" -Virginia

"I will make the absolute most of what I've got. As it is, it is a wonderful life. I'm quite fine, thank you." -Roger

"It's a thing that happens to ordinary people. I enjoy life, I feel fairly normal. I have a lot to give!" -Esther

This handout was produced by a group of people living successfully with Early Stage Memory Loss, participants in the Gathering Place program at the Greenwood Senior Center. We aim to reduce stigma and transform what it means to live with memory loss in our community by sharing our personal thoughts and telling "the new dementia story," not a story of fear, but a story of hope. We believe it is possible to live full and meaningful lives with memory loss. If you'd like to know more, ask us!

**Greenwood Senior Center, (206) 297-0875.**

# THE GATHERING PLACE

## Early Stage Memory Loss Enrichment Program at the Greenwood Senior Center

- Four pillars:
  - Cognitive stimulation
  - Physical movement
  - Social connection
  - Cultural engagement
- Diversity in group re: age, diagnosis
- Meets once a week, 3 hours



# THE LETTER PROJECT

Dear friend,

We are a community of people living successfully with memory loss. We understand that you also have received a diagnosis of memory loss. We want to recognize your courage in finding out what is going on. It is normal to feel disbelief, anger, fear, and denial, but know that you are not alone. Our hearts go out to you.

You may want to hide your diagnosis. Many of us did too, but we have found that sharing what we are living with lightens the load and allows us to lessen stigma surrounding memory loss. We urge you not to hide. Connect with others who are living with memory loss, and encourage your family to get support. Acceptance is important. We are all in this together.

We have learned to live with our memory loss and still have productive lives with family and friends. We would like to give you hope that you too can live a full life. There will be obstacles to come, but you have an opportunity to give back to your community and yourself, and to experience beauty, happiness, and kindness.

Sincerely,

Walt, Mark, Bob, Sarah, Roger, Ron, Helene, Rick, and Midge



Members of the Gathering Place  
Early Stage Memory Loss Enrichment Program  
Greenwood Senior Center, Seattle, WA



www.momentiasattle.org



MOMENTIA

Home Calendar Community Programs Contact Us



## Welcome to Momentia

Momentia is a movement transforming what it means to live with dementia, changing the story from one of fear, despair and isolation to one of hope, growth, purpose and connection. Momentia celebrates the courage and strengths of people living with dementia and creates innovative opportunities for engagement in and with community. Momentia is a story of living fully and boldly and finding joy in the moment.

### Upcoming Featured Events

**\*\*Special Event\*\* CAMP MOMENTIA**  
Enjoy a day of exploration, creativity and community including nature walks, painting, a campfire with songs and s'mores!  
Sep 19, 2015

### This Week's Events

- |                                      |                                   |   |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----|
| Featured                             |                                   |   | ◀ ▶ |
| Sep 15, 2015 -<br>1:00pm - 2:30pm    | Sep 15, 2015 -<br>2:30pm - 3:30pm | Sep 15, 2015 -<br>9:30am - 11:00am            |     |
| Remember the<br>Hungry *New<br>Time* | Alzheimer's Cafe -<br>Greenlake   | Staying Connected<br>- ESML Seminar -<br>Kent |     |