THE ALZHEIMER’S CAFÉ MODEL:
A GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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Alzheimer’s Café at the Stage Door Café
Photo: Greenwood Senior Center
Organized by the Dementia Action Collaborative’s dementia-friendly communities project team:

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OUTLINE

- Intro to Building Dementia-Friendly Communities in Washington State
  - Lynne Korte, Program Manager, Aging and Long Term Support Administration

- Alzheimer’s Café: A Simple and Accessible Start to Dementia-Friendly Programming
  - Cecily Kaplan, Director, Greenwood Senior Center

- Question & Answer Session

- Wrap Up: Additional Resources & Next Steps
BUILDING DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN WASHINGTON STATE

Lynne Korte, MPH
DAC Program Manager, Aging and Long Term Support Administration

Columbia City Alzheimer’s Café.
Photo: Full Life Care.
DEMENTIA IN WASHINGTON STATE

- Around 107,000 people living with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias
- Over 320,000 people caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias
- 3rd leading cause of death

People with dementia will increase 180% by 2040
WASHINGTON STATE PLAN TO ADDRESS ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

- March 2014: Legislation created the Alzheimer’s Disease Working Group to develop a state plan to address Alzheimer’s disease
- January 2016: Washington State Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias released and approved
- April 2016: Dementia Action Collaborative convened
Focus on what we can do

- Through heightened collaboration
- Within existing resources
- Community members
- Local government
- Housing and transportation
- Communities of faith
- Health care
- Long term care
- Legal and financial planning
- Banks, libraries, businesses
- Community engagement opportunities
DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

“A community where people with dementia fully belong…”
“Awareness and respect of persons with dementia and their caregivers help us feel comfortable. There are people in the community where I go routinely (like Denny’s, or volunteering at the golf course) who are aware of my dementia. I am treated with acceptance, patience and respect. I feel good about it.”

“A dementia-friendly community is where people care for people with dementia. The point is respect - caring about people. I live alone, but I have many, many friends in my apartment building. I tell everyone at some point that I have Alzheimer’s, and they watch out for me.”

Where people with memory loss are empowered to remain actively involved in community life.
PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA....

- Are respected and valued
- Can participate in their communities
- Stay connected socially
- Enjoy meaningful lives
- Have a voice in their communities
- Have access to diagnosis and support
- Have transportation options
- Have community housing options
- Can navigate neighborhoods/public spaces

https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/dementia-action-collaborative
ALZHEIMER’S CAFÉ
A SIMPLE AND ACCESSIBLE START TO DEMENTIA FRIENDLY PROGRAMMING

Cecily Kaplan
Director, Greenwood Senior Center
What is an Alzheimer’s Café?

- An Alzheimer’s Café or Memory Cafe is a social gathering for people living with dementia and their loved ones in a community space like a coffee shop or restaurant. An Alzheimer’s café decreases isolation. Alzheimer’s cafes provide a comfortable and supportive space where participants enjoy good friends and good food.

- It is also works to educate about and continue to work against ageism and stigma around dementia by being located and co-sponsored by community businesses.

- Alzheimer’s Cafes can provide an opportunity for people to share community resources with one another.
ALZHEIMER’S CAFÉ ARE NOT

- Adult Day programs or drop-off programs.
- They are not opportunities for medical or professional advice.
- They are not marketing opportunities for particular agencies or services.
The Alzheimer Café was the brainchild of Dutch psychiatrist Bere Miesen.

Started in the Netherlands in 1997 – European Model

First café in the United States started in 2008 by Dr. Jytte Lokvig – American Model

Greenwood Senior Center was the 2nd in the US – started in Seattle in 2010. There are now eight in the greater Seattle area and over 15 in our state!
The European Model features presentations and information on Alzheimer’s issues combined with a social hour. Caregivers are offered consultation and support.

The American Model focuses first and foremost on the person. It’s a celebration and a respite from the disease. Participants, both the person with memory loss and the caregivers, enjoy a social time in a local café or other venue, good food, conversation and music. Staff and/or volunteers are there to create a supportive environment.
WHY START AN ALZHEIMER’S CAFÉ?

- People diagnosed with dementia are hungry for social activities that are different than support groups.
- It is important that couples, friends and family (caregiver and person with diagnosis) have something they can both enjoy.
- At the cafés, dementia is “not in the room.” Friendship, food and fun are enjoyed by all.
- It a simple yet profound start to dementia friendly programming.
Assess interest - Can ask at support groups, have a focus group or do a survey.

Find Partners - Can be an organization like a senior center, service club or faith community or could be a steering committee made up of a lead or champion and volunteers.
Venue -

- Should be a warm and welcoming space. Not too big or noisy. We recommend a public café, restaurant or a room in a community space like a library, museum or park. By being in a public space, Alzheimer’s cafés also help break down stigma around dementia.
- Easy access and plentiful parking.
- Wheelchair accessibility and disabled parking.
- Comfortable furniture.
- Some food and beverages for purchase.
- To foster a relaxed social environment, preferably not a venue related to senior care or the medical system.
- A sense that the staff of venue are interested, onboard and excited to partner.
Alzheimer’s Café at the Frye, Frye Art Museum, Seattle WA

Memory Café at Elmer’s Restaurant, Tacoma WA
Timing - Cafes normally run 1.5 – 2 hours. Usually on a once a month basis. Keep in mind target audience and also times/dates when your venue may be quieter.

Activities at the Café - A café can just be a place for socializing. You can have a theme each month, i.e. Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day and add some table decorations or candy. Some cafés incorporate interactive activities like sing-a-longs, creative arts or storytelling.

Staffing – Cafés need at least one consistent person to act as host or facilitator whether paid or volunteer. A host should be someone who enjoys socializing, is welcoming and has some experience of being with people with dementia. Other support includes set-up, sign-in and socializing...having some extra sets of eyes is helpful.
- Create a flier that can be distributed.
- Connect with senior centers, Alzheimer’s Association, assisted living facilities, home care agencies, for advertising.
- Establish relationships with local media.

- Don’t worry if it starts off small or ebbs and flows…let go of a numbers expectation.
- No solicitations from outside businesses.
- OK to announce other dementia friendly programming in the community.
- Themes and activities can be helpful, but not necessary.
- Use a sign-in sheet and do reminder calls or emails a few days before.
- Nametags are helpful.
- We use social media to advertise with our already existing flier.
FINAL THOUGHTS

- Best source of evaluation comes from the attendees. Seek feedback.
- For further information about Alzheimer’s Cafés:
  - www.alzheimerscafe.com
  - www.alzcafes.org
- The Alzheimer's and Memory Café: How to Start and Succeed by Jytte Lokvig
- Massachusetts Memory Café Toolkit
“Where else can you and your loved one go out and eat together, be totally relaxed, and know you are accepted before you even open the door?” – Lueen M, guest at Mill Creek Supper Club, Battle Ground WA

“What we like about it is the singing – the singing is a big, big part. And the socializing with other people. That’s really important.” Alice and Paul P, guests at Seattle Area Alzheimer’s Cafés

“Alzheimer’s Cafes are especially beneficial to people who have been newly diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and their caregivers. As you interact with others, you can find out from folks what they have gone through and learn what to expect in a friendly, informal atmosphere.” Bob W, guest at Tacoma Area Alzheimer’s Cafes
MORE INFORMATION & NEXT STEPS

Resource Links

- Dementia Action Collaborative: www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/dementia-action-collaborative (Includes links to written WA State Alzheimer’s Cafe guidelines, Webinar powerpoint and recording.)
- Dementia Friendly America: www.dfamerica.org
- Dementia Friends USA: http://dementiafriendsusa.org/
- Massachusetts Memory Café Toolkit: (Google this title for guide, templates, etc)
- Momentia Seattle: www.momentiaseattle.org (Highlights variety of dementia-friendly programs)
- Library Interest Group: https://www.ascladirect.org/interest-groups/alzheimers-related-dementias-interest-group/ (Includes resources for library-specific Memory Cafés)

Get connected!

Join our Facebook Group to network and share ideas with other café organizers:
Search for “Alzheimer’s Café / Memory Café Organizers – Washington State”
QUESTIONS?

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