

Changing the World of Older People Especially those Living with Dementia Using Montessori

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present here. Today I want you to leave the classroom or wherever you work and come into my world. I would like to share my work with you and show how the Montessori philosophy and methods can be used not only at the beginning of the life cycle but also at the end.



Can you imagine what it might be like to walk down a hall and, along the way, find that you have absolutely no idea where you are? Can you imagine having a loved one sitting by your side referring to you as “Mom” or “Dad” but have no idea who this person is? Or a stranger who you have never seen before insist you remove your clothes for a shower? How devastating would it be to encounter these situations throughout each and every day? Would you become agitated and upset, or depressed and anxious? Now add to that a day that is void of activity, meaning and orientating, supportive information. Imagine how it must feel to need the toilet or your room but not be able to find it. Imagine a world that lacks the information you need to help you find your way and/or remain purposefully engaged in life. And then, when you try to do things for yourself you find you don’t remember how, or the things you need to do are just simply too challenging and complex. When you try to communicate your messages, no one seems to understand. Generally, everything seems to be a challenge, and you feel that you are no longer engaged in life and living. Life simply offers few successes and opportunities, to enjoy meaningful relationships seems to

have completely disappeared and so you spend your days confused, frightened and waiting.

This is the reality of many people living with dementia. The number of people affected by dementia is alarming and the costs associated with the disease are enormous. It is well recognized that dementia not only takes a tremendous toll on those people living with the disease but also on care providers, families, health and social services. And there is no cure in sight.

Can you imagine a world where you walk down a hall and there are signs and cue cards that tell you where you are and what is about to happen. Can you imagine a place where everybody wears name badges and you do not have to try to remember who people are. A place where the toilet and your bedroom are clearly signed. Where activities are everywhere for the partaking.

Everyday there is a reason to get out of bed, jobs to do and activities that bring great pleasure and fill the day. Activities that are meaningful, at your level of ability and where the sense of achievement when you complete them makes you feel good, special, and alive. A place where activities are designed for your level of ability and enable you to maintain the fine motor skills required for feeding yourself or shaving or dressing. A place where cue cards guide your activities making sure you never fail. Every day is a new day offering a dozen different reasons to get out of bed. Your future is promising and it feels good to be alive.

This is the world of a person living in a Montessori focused facility and the world I will continue to promote as I continue to spread to wonder of Montessori for aged care. I There is such opportunity to change peoples life's. I leave you with a quote that guides me forward and I hope inspires others.

If there is no passion in your work, then have you really given. Find your passion, whatever it may be, become it and let it become you and you will find great things happen for you, to you and because of you.
Alfred Armand



Thank You