

Art Gallery of Hamilton presents *Artful Moments: Shared Learning*

Announcing the public launch of an online curriculum to support museums in creating programs for people living with dementia.

www.artfulmoments.ca



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The Art Gallery of Hamilton is pleased to announce the public launch of *Artful Moments: Shared Learning*, a program to support museums in creating programs for people living with dementia.

Artful Moments was created by the Art Gallery of Hamilton and it provides meaningful, individualized, and engaging activities using collections and exhibitions that encourage participants to be creative, to express themselves and to connect with others through shared experiences. The focus of the program is on enhancing the strengths and abilities of the participant, and on the process of the experience rather than a final product.

By combining the specialized strategies for dementia care with creative activities, the program explores how these experiences can help to open up a world of in-the-moment engagement and enjoyment for the participants with dementia while providing opportunities for social connection and shared experience with loved ones and peers.

Artful Moments: Shared Learning is an online learning platform comprised of 6 modules that introduce museum teams to the foundational knowledge and the process of building programs that support the abilities and interests of people living with dementia.



“It is the culmination of our own experiences and learning over time, presenting the key information and ideas that we have found most successful over the past 12 years of program delivery,” said Laurie Kilgour-Walsh, Lead of Wellness at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. “Through *Artful Moments: Shared Learning* the Art Gallery of Hamilton strives to encourage and support other museums in creating programs for people living with dementia that are engaging, inclusive and meaningful.”

Dementia is a general term for the progressive loss of memory, communication skills, problem-solving and other thinking abilities that become severe enough to interfere with daily life. It describes a set of symptoms that can be caused by different illnesses, the most common being Alzheimer’s Disease but also includes a number of other diseases.

Following a diagnosis of dementia and as a person begins to experience changes in their abilities, they may feel less comfortable participating in public activities – they can experience stigma or feel like their needs will not be met in activities they once enjoyed. Feelings of social isolation may take a toll on the person and their family. When we work to bring people living with dementia into public and cultural spaces, we take an important step toward building a dementia-friendly community. We believe that programs like *Artful Moments* have an important role to play in that endeavour.

Artful Moments: Shared Learning is a free resource that is flexible and adaptable to each user's needs and prior experience, and focuses on ways to adapt each museum's strengths and assets to suit a new audience. The program is offered in both official languages.

For more information about *Artful Moments: Shared Learning*, please visit ArtfulMoments.ca.

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About Artful Moments

Artful Moments is a program created by the Art Gallery of Hamilton that provides meaningful, individualized, and engaging activities using gallery collections and exhibitions to encourage participants who are living with dementia to be creative, to express themselves and to connect with others through shared experiences. The program focuses on enhancing the strengths and abilities of the participant, regardless of their abilities, state of health or social circumstances, while presenting activities at a level of engagement and rigour expected of gallery and museum programming. Artful Moments focuses on the process and experience rather than a final product or demonstration of learning.

About the Art Gallery of Hamilton

Founded in 1914, the Art Gallery of Hamilton is the oldest and largest public art gallery in the region. Its permanent collection, which is focused on historical Canadian, 19th-century European, and International and Contemporary art, numbers more than 10,000 works and is recognized as one of Canada's finest. The AGH is a vital creative hub and centre of lifelong learning that enables people of all ages to enrich their lives by gaining a deeper understanding of art. The Gallery is supported by the City of Hamilton, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

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www.artfulmoments.ca

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