



MEMORIES IN THE MAKING® is the signature art program of the Alzheimer's Association. This unique program, introduced in 1988, allows individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to express themselves through art and communicate or share the essence of who they are.

The benefits of this program are multi-faceted. Through Memories in the Making, we have found that a person with diminished verbal and organizational skills can still communicate by creating a drawing or picture.

#### The Program

- ❖ Unlike traditional "arts and crafts" classes for the elderly, this program and its training focus specifically on the needs and limitations of people affected by dementia.
- ❖ It firmly believes the artists have many meaningful things they would like to say, no matter how garbled their verbal expression might be. It also believes they can do more than they have been given credit for to date.
- ❖ It does not "teach or criticize", but coaches and encourages.
- ❖ It focuses on what the participant can do, not on what skills have been lost.
- ❖ It provides a supportive, non-critical environment where the participant can form new friendships, share opinions and thoughts without judgment.

#### Benefits for the Individual with Alzheimer's

- ❖ Encourages and fosters communication through painting and awakened memories.
- ❖ Increases self-esteem through the creation of something of value.
- ❖ Satisfies the intrinsic need for work ethic
- ❖ Provides a "safe" environment of trust for the participants to interact socially. Often, many individuals with Alzheimer's disease tend to avoid social situations due to decreased self-confidence. Both the art process and the interaction with other participants rebuild that confidence level, thereby increasing quality of life.
- ❖ Increases the level of concentration, sustained attention and normalcy.

#### Benefits for the Long-term Care Community (Adult Day, Memory Care)

- ❖ The self-confidence that the artists exhibit after gaining a sense of success is a wonderful mood and self-esteem enhancer and often results in greater cooperation with the caregiver.
- ❖ Allows the activities staff the opportunity to align with a program they know will have successful results.
- ❖ Strengthens the relationship with the Alzheimer's Association and gives your community recognition on the Alzheimer's Association website.
- ❖ As the program grows and the artwork makes its way into the community through various events, the artists and their place of residence will be identified with each exhibited piece.

#### Benefits for the Family

- ❖ When an artist unlocks a memory and expresses that through painting, the artwork then affords an opportunity for their family to communicate with them about both the art and the story.
- ❖ The artist's paintings reaffirm to the family that the essence of their loved one is still there.
- ❖ As the artwork makes its way into events and exhibits, the family will have the opportunity to connect with others who might also be dealing with Alzheimer's disease, and share the benefits of the program and the long-term care community providing it.