

CECD 7th 2016 CONFERENCE ON CREATIVITY AND AGING

Vernon, BC, Canada

We set out to provide an information-rich educational event open to caregivers, including anyone interested in exploring the benefits of the arts in healthcare, specifically with older adults and people living with dementia. The conference attracted about 40 participants including 11 presenters of stellar caliber from Canada and the US. Based on feedback collected in a survey, e-mails and conversations, these outcomes were reported: quality presentations based on research and good practices, small group interactions allowed personal attention, 5 different workshops helped recharge energies and stimulate ideas to implement them at work and home. Although we could have predicted some outcomes, we were surprised by how many of the participants perceived the conference and praised it for being small and intimate and allowing meaningful time to socialize with colleagues so ideas could be exchanged and grow. Some said it was healing and reassuring. As a consequence, we are now planning a workshop/retreat for next year. We especially recognized the tremendous need to break away from caring for others, to re-group emotionally and physically before returning to a highly stressful task. Another surprise was the total commitment of the At This Age group of 8 seniors who participated and hosted some conference presenters. These seniors understand the value of the arts in maintaining healthier brain functioning; they went out of their way to make the conference a success. Thank you Alzheimer Society of Canada for supporting this conference. We look forward to future support in this much-needed care field.



Left to right: Jim Arnold, Joni Vajda, Gary Glazner, Leanne Broughton