

TUE MAR 22 Mapping Perceptions

The MoMA Alzheimer's Project Summit

The following are selected responses to our “Reflectionnaire,” which asked participants in Mapping Perceptions: The MoMA Alzheimer's Project Summit to reflect on the day.

“The keynote was my favorite part of the day. It really brought forward the important idea of generating ideas WITH people with dementia rather than FOR them.”

“The learning panel was incredibly interesting to me. I really appreciate the efforts of MoMA and others to understand the science behind this disease and to integrate that into our knowledge and understanding of art. I also liked hearing a shift in the language we use to describe Alzheimer's and caregivers: I'm now trying to now use the terms cognitive impairment and care partner at my organization and I hope it catches on.”

“Networking with people with similar thoughts, issues and challenges at their workplace was very interesting and helpful. Just great to be in and amongst a community that shared a similar vernacular!”

“Several people who work in facilities that house people with dementia noted that all too often the staff at the facilities insist that the patients are incapable of learning anything new, while the people at this conference insisted that considerable learning can and does take place.”

“I was particularly interested in hearing about some of the challenges (rather than successes) from other institutions that are doing the program. I got a lot out of the break out session where we were paired with a health care provider and museum person; I learned more inquiry-based approach to a gallery conversation, which was reinforced in the break out session in the galleries.”

“It was exciting to hear how many different kinds of professionals are working to improve the lives of those living with Alzheimer's, as well as the various ways each of these individuals uses his/her expertise to develop programming. The exchanges I had were helpful in making me see how I can stretch the limits of the work I already do.”

“For an arts administrator, it was extremely useful to be among professionals in other fields, all motivated with great passion for the subject. The junction of art and behavioral science became an important point of conversation.”

“The summit was absolutely transformative for how I understand people living with Alzheimer’s disease, and for creating the program that we are just about to launch. I received great tips for the docents, as well as the understanding that no type or style of artwork is off limits. I was incredibly motivated and inspired by all the speakers, and can’t wait to jump into this program we are creating.”

“I missed the perspective of the family caregiver. I also think we need to remind people that these community programs meet the needs of those with dementia in the early stage- middle stage. What they’re not seeing is that a person with Alzheimer’s disease will spend about 40% of their time in the advanced stages. There is still a role, a significant role for the arts in connecting to, and reaching the person with little verbal communication, and in providing a tool for the family caregiver to connect with the person who is in the very advanced stages of the disease.”

“The summit was inspiring and motivating. The summit transformed the way I think about arts programming. I now see it as part of a lifestyle revolution for the memory loss community. These programs are extremely important because they provide an opportunity for expression, social interaction, and artistic engagement.”

“I think that best practices in arts engagement are applicable to all segments of the older adult population, from active retirees to institutionalized adults to people with dementia. Our work can support the full range of arts and aging programming.”

“After attending the summit, I am not going to try and pull memories from people as much as I will try to enrich the moments wherein I am providing the experience.”

“I came away from the summit re-energized to create and implement a program at my facility. It was heartening to know that so many museums and related organizations were supportive of programming for this audience and gave me hope that instituting it in my facility will be a reality in the not-too-distant future!”

“I think that the real impact of dementia on the person with the illness and the family members was dangerously minimized.”

“The summit took me out of the day to day challenges I face at my museum (budget, small staff, small collection), confirmed the value of doing an arts program for those with dementia despite internal museum challenges, and offered ways I could partner with other organizations, artists, health care workers, etc. The summit also made me consider how we shut people with dementia out through language, as Richard Taylor explained ‘the choice of words is the choice of worlds’.”

“Incredibly. I found the day to be worthwhile and inspirational. I would suggest that the next summit (hope there is one) would include sessions that model how to in fact accomplish particular things i.e. recruitment (of visitors), i.e. How can we create a less segmented society and how do the arts play a role. Something that follows up on what we discussed at this summit (which included ideas for solutions). Also, things change all the time, so there would be a need to address what the current state of affairs in museum programming for this audience is (i.e. are museums seeing their already in place programs growing? Is there a momentum upward/downward...that sort of thing. The summit did not address solutions necessarily.”

“The simple fact of coming altogether really brought home the fact that we are part of a movement to reverse the paradigm of dementia care. So this is very exciting! It was also very clear, that we need to diversify the community - a big, long-term project.”

“Great opportunity to meet creative people from all over. I loved being able to exchange ideas with such a diverse and accomplished group of people. Thank you for providing an inspirational experience!”

“I would like to see something evolve from this whereby we can meet on an annual basis and perhaps have a larger event, a conference, to see what everyone else is doing and find more ways of collaborating and supporting each other's work.”