

Taking It to the Streets Launching in September 2023

Momentum Grows for International Campaign to Shatter Silence Around Dementia

For immediate release: NEW YORK, NY, August 18, 2023 — With just weeks to go before the launch of [“Taking It to the Streets,”](#) an international grassroots campaign that will take place during the week of September 18-24, 2023, excitement for this groundbreaking effort is growing.

Taking to the Streets is an initiative led by [Reimagining Dementia: A Creative Coalition for Justice](#) (Coalition), which has called on its 830 plus members and other concerned individuals and organizations to host public-facing events, activities, and conversations that present a creative alternative to the fear, stigma and hopelessness surrounding dementia. According to Coalition coordinator Mary Fridley, enthusiasm for the campaign is building across the world.

‘We’re hearing every day from individuals and organizations globally — communities across Canada and the U.S, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, India, the UK, Italy, Argentina, Brazil and — are sharing with us how they will be taking it to the streets this fall.’ Events include an art show at the Urban Elephant Festival, a music and poetry event at a local library and the debut of a short film highlighting co-creativity in music with people living with dementia at the Royal Academy of Music (London); festive street corner operations (Bay Area, Las Vegas and New York City); a screening of three short films on creativity and dementia/art exhibit featuring work by people living with dementia (Toronto); an exhibit of ichiban art (Japan); *Dementia Man*, a one-man show performed by Sam Simon, who lives with dementia (Northern Virginia) and a march led by senior citizens and community-wide event (Durban, South Africa).

Among those leading the way is Nancy Nelson, a Las-Vegas-based Coalition member, poet and co-founder of dangle & dot. “When I first entered the world of dementia in 2013,” Nelson says, “I quickly realized that ‘what is to be is up to me’ so with the support of friends and community, my diagnosis has not been an ending but a new beginning. My life is full of ah-ha moments filled with sprinkles of fun, some laughter and joy amongst serious day-to-day learning about myself and dementia. I urge everyone to join me in taking it to the streets so that everyone affected by dementia can live better, longer and with purpose.”

Nancy is one of 55 million people living with dementia worldwide (World Health Organization), a figure expected to triple by 2025 - and this doesn’t include family, friends and others impacted. And yet, Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias continue to be dominated by a stigma- and shame-filled ‘tragedy narrative’ that, according to Fridley, has led to this very human condition being surrounded by an isolating “cone of silence.”

“*Taking It to the Streets* is all about winning the hearts and minds of people across the world so that together we can shatter the silence and shame that continues to define how dementia is viewed in our society. And we’re doing so with creativity and through the arts, play and more because this is *how* we restore humanity to people impacted by dementia and ensure that diagnosis is a starting point for joy, connection, growth and new possibilities.”

The *Taking It to the Streets* logo, campaign information and social media toolkit are available on the [Reimagining Dementia Coalition website](#).

Reimagining Dementia: A Creative Coalition for Justice is an international group of people living with dementia, carers/care partners, family and community members, dementia activists and allies, health professionals, advocates, artists, academics, policymakers and others, who share a vision of care that promotes belonging, relationships, creativity, joy and the possibility of growth for everyone. Founded in 2020, the Coalition has over 830 members in 35 countries.

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

- Mary Fridley, Coalition Coordinator and other Coalition leaders, including those living with dementia, are available for interviews. For more information or to set up an interview, contact the Coalition at reimaginingdementia@gmail.com / 929-285-1691.