

What have we learned about dance and social inclusion from people living with dementia?

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Why dance?

DANCE IS ENGAGING ON MULTIPLE LEVELS:

- Physically
- Cognitively
- Socially
- Emotionally
- Creatively

Why Canada's National Ballet School/Baycrest?

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The Baycrest NBS Sharing Dance Seniors Program

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

OUR APPROACH:

- Classes follow development structure of traditional dance class (e.g., warm-up, cool-down)
- Each dance has a specific physical and artistic goal
- Emphasis on creativity = no right or wrong way
- Dance for dance sake!

ACCESSIBILITY:

- Options and variations offered for older adults with varying physical and cognitive abilities

How is the program delivered across Canada?

VIA ON-DEMAND VIDEO STREAMING

- Offered in 8 week terms
(Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)
- On-site facilitator does not require
dance experience
- Informed by facilitator feedback

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What would you say was the most enjoyable part of the class today for participants? Why?

What would you say was the least enjoyable part of the class today for participants? Why?





Does your group have any specific songs or genres of music they would like to hear in an upcoming class?

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What does the program look like in your space?



New to the Baycrest NBS Sharing Dance Seniors course? Begin with the Facilitator Training Module.

[Facilitator Training Module](#)



Additional Resources

- [Technical Help Checklist](#)
- [Feedback Form](#)
- [Contact Information](#)

Promotional Material

- [Email Blurb](#)
- [Poster](#)
- [One Page Promo](#)
- [Letterhead](#)

What does the program look like in your space?



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What do you need to run the program?

WHAT YOU NEED

- TV connected to laptop
- Wi-Fi connection
- Chairs (armless recommended when possible)

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

- Online training to facilitate the program
- Access to the online resources
- High quality dance classes taught by professional dance teachers





Questions?

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Social inclusion

The concept of social inclusion recognizes that participation is not just an individual choice; **people and organizations shape programs, practices, policies, and attitudes** to more fully include those who experience exclusion (Funk, 2015).

We need to know more about what types of interventions can enhance the social inclusion and well-being of older adults.

Social outcomes are health outcomes.

Social inclusion

Meaningful participation in relationships and activities

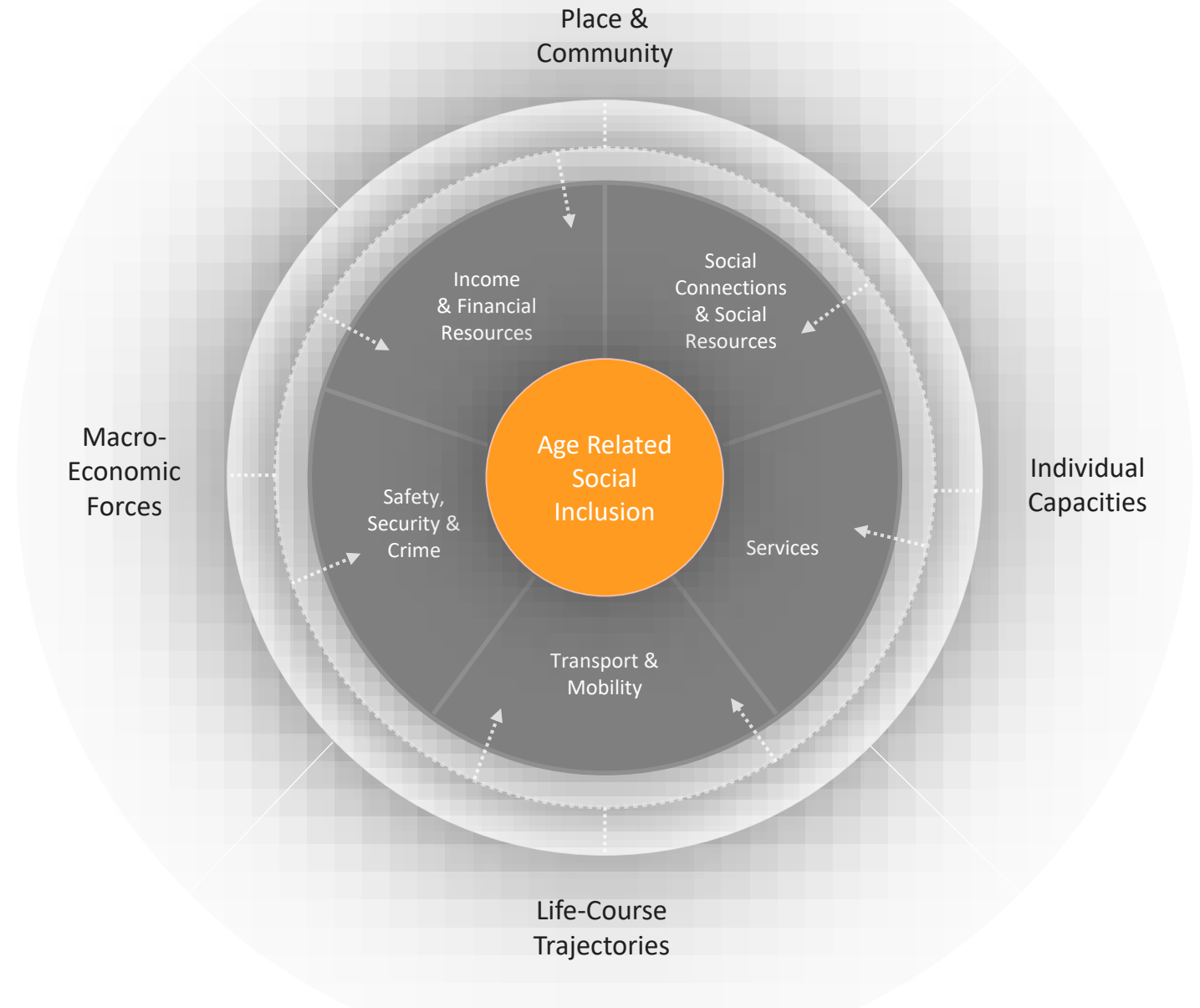
(Wilton et al., 2018).

Multi-dimensional,
multi-scaler, and relational

(Walsh et al., 2012).

Focus on the embodied self-expression and encounter

(Kontos, 2004; 2012; Wilton & Evans, 2016).



Pilot studies

BRANDON REGION,
MANITOBA

Alzheimer Society
MANITOBA
Dementia Care & Brain Health

PETERBOROUGH REGION,
ONTARIO

 **Community
Care**
Empowering you to live at home
in the City and County of Peterborough

Brandon pilot overview

Phases 1, 2 & 3

PHASE ONE (B1):

Dress Rehearsal

PHASE TWO (B2):

Brandon, Minnedosa, Neepawa

PHASE THREE (B3):

Brandon, Carberry, Hamiota,
Killarney, Minnedosa, Neepawa



MANITOBA



HAMIOTA



MINNEDOSA



NEEPAWA



BRANDON



CARBERRY



KILLARNEY

Data collection

Methods

- Observations
- Diaries
- Focus groups
- Interviews

Breadth of voices

- People living with dementia
- Family carers
- Facilitators and other staff
- Volunteers



Understanding experience



Being part of something bigger




“She knew who I was”. (Participant)

“That’s us!” (Observation)


“It made me feel that ... I’m part of a bigger world ...” (Participant)

“Getting out” and connecting with community

A photograph showing a group of elderly people seated around a large, light-colored wooden table in a well-lit room. Several people are looking towards the camera, while others are engaged in conversation. A woman in a dark blue shirt, likely a volunteer, is standing and interacting with the group. The room has large windows in the background, and there are some plants and decorations on shelves. The overall atmosphere is social and communal.

“People would talk about the dance they used to go to—square dancing, their partner, growing up... It made people communicate because they had shared experience maybe and wouldn’t necessarily talk about that experience but they would go back in time, one-room schools, square dances, the music, how they danced. It would bring back a lot of memories and they would share them. I was surprised how much they interacted afterwards” (Volunteer)

Connecting with carers

A photograph of two women sitting at a table, smiling. The woman on the left has short blonde hair and wears glasses and a colorful floral shirt. The woman on the right has short grey hair and wears glasses and a dark blue long-sleeved shirt with a circular logo. The background is a simple room with a white door and a wooden chair. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter and white text.

“It was a great opportunity for them to get together and do something during a visit and to have that new something to do during their daily visit” (Facilitator)

“I got to see people from the community and I liked that” (Participant)

“Small towns need something like this to...sort of put us back on the map” (Participant)

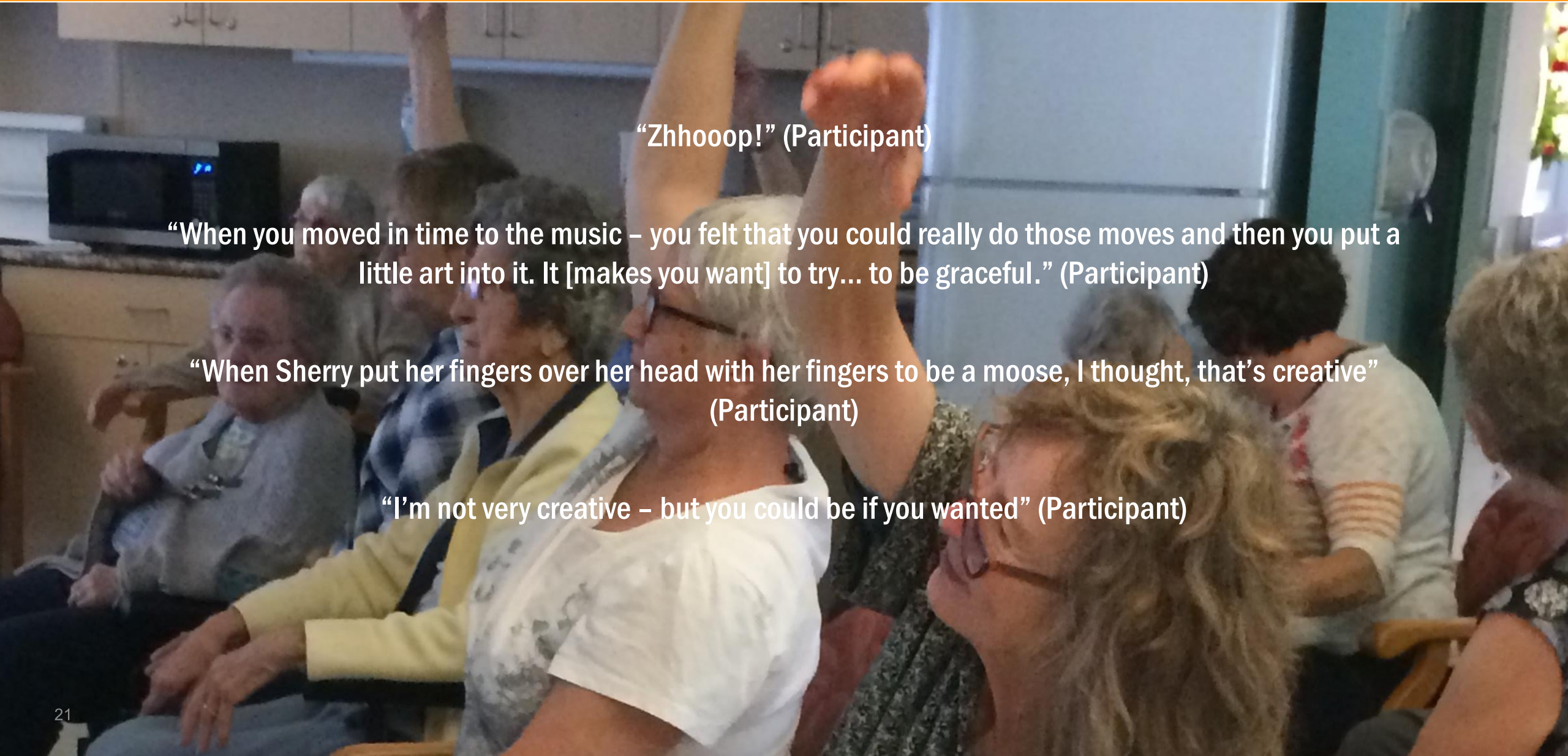
Connecting with staff

Fostering reciprocal relationships

“...a time to be interactive with residents in a new role”
(staff)

“I think it’s that feel of community—all sitting together—
work family—not just the residents” (staff)

Creative expression and humour




“Zhhoop!” (Participant)

“When you moved in time to the music – you felt that you could really do those moves and then you put a little art into it. It [makes you want] to try... to be graceful.” (Participant)

“When Sherry put her fingers over her head with her fingers to be a moose, I thought, that’s creative”
(Participant)

“I’m not very creative – but you could be if you wanted” (Participant)

Supportive facilitation

A photograph of a group of elderly people sitting in a room, some in wheelchairs, during a session. The room has a light-colored floor and walls. There are tables and chairs in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

“... eye contact, let them know you’re rooting for them – engaging each one – acknowledging them, call out to them, reinforcing that what they’re doing was terrific – their confidence level isn’t always up there – so some of them don’t try”
(Facilitator)

“... they’d be putting the wrong foot out and you’d always look as if they got caught – it was kind of funny – smiling – shrug it off ...” (Facilitator)

Next steps

There were limitations of the program in different settings, particularly in relation to human resources and training

NBS is actively working on developing more training opportunities

We still need to explore how and whether this program could be delivered at home; would the impact be the same?

Conclusions

Dance can support social inclusion and expression of people living with dementia

Technology can facilitate distance programing and create more opportunities for connection

Facilitators (recreation professionals) play a critical role in program success

Training, leadership, and collaboration are essential

Acknowledgements

The research team includes:

Rachel Bar, Canada's National Ballet School

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Visit our website

www.sdseniorsresearch.com

