

# Village Improv for Alzheimer's

## **Village Improv for Alzheimer's (VIA), Provincial**

Inside Out Theatre

*Project Lead: Col Cseke, Artistic Director*

VIA is an innovative approach to person-centered dementia care that fosters self-expression, agency, recreation and social engagement through arts and creativity-based care. Using improvised theatre and storytelling, VIA's program creates meaningful activities that have been specifically developed for individuals living with dementia and designed to preserve dignity and autonomy, validate perception and reality, incorporate personal identity and life experiences, and focus on failure-free experiences that highlight participants' strengths and aptitudes, not disease or preserving memory. The principles at the centre of both the VIA program and improvised theatre are that there are no wrong answers, and all ideas are celebrated and built upon.

VIA uses the experience and tools of theatre to reduce anxiety, ease stress, and lower social isolation in the lives of people living with dementia. Beginning in 2012, Inside Out Theatre has offered the VIA program in partnership with the Alzheimers Society of Calgary's Club 36 day program.

This initiative will allow the VIA facilitation team to develop a training manual that will be used to share the tools and skills used in the program with a wide range of care givers, occupational therapists, and other Albertans engaged with people living with dementia.

