

Hi my name is Susan Stubblefield. For the past eight years, I have been a senior caregiver in Missoula. Increasingly, I have found myself working with people living with Alzheimer's and dementia. Currently, I am volunteering my time on a new project with retired RN and facilitator of two Alzheimer's support groups, Jackie Johnson.

Last April, the University of Montana Gerontology Society showed an award winning documentary, *Alive Inside*, at the UC Theater. The film shows individuals in their care residences, or homes, who were given headphones to listen via an iPod to their favorite music. Many of these people had dementia or other cognitive impairments. The responses for those filmed were wonderful, each in a unique way, and many truly accessed their inner aliveness.

You can research more about the film, and its purpose, at www.musicandmemory.org. After seeing *Alive Inside*, I joined Jackie to explore how we could make this unique music therapy available in Missoula for all who might benefit!

It has taken hold in many states and some Canadian provinces. Wisconsin CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid services) is actually funding the therapy state wide!

The rest of the information on the Missoula Music & Memory Project is available in the attachment provided. This is an exceptional opportunity for people of all ages in our community who want to be involved in a project that could impact hundreds of individuals in our area! We are looking for leaders as well as team members!

Thanks for reading this and the accompanying material, and please share it with friends and family as well as your fellow church members or service club. If you have questions and/or wish to participate, please email or call me.

Thank you,

Susan Stubblefield
scsinmt@gmail.com
406-543-0531

Missoula Music & Memory Project

If you have any experience with a loved one who struggles with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia, you know the great challenges and sense of loss for all involved. But what if there were a medication-free way to help your loved one reawaken to the world?

It turns out that there is a simple and elegant solution: personalized music playlists. Hearing personal favorites on a device like an iPod can tap deep emotional memories and enable many of those with Alzheimer's, dementia, Parkinson's and other cognitive challenges to literally reawaken their inner aliveness.

You can watch the trailer for the documentary film, *Alive Inside*, and find more information on www.musicandmemory.org

We will be showing the film free of charge at the Missoula Senior Citizens Center on Wednesday, September 16 at 2pm and on Monday, September 21 at 7pm. The film is 75 minutes, and you are welcome to stay and ask questions or share your own experiences using music for therapy. We also have copies of the DVD to purchase (\$14) or to loan.

Along with the film, we will hand out an informational sheet about developing a team of volunteers in September to bring the program to Missoula care facilities as well as to homes of people caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's and dementia. Our goal is to have volunteers from the community as well as to involve students from the local high schools and the University of Montana.

We have contacted Missoula care facilities about our local Music & Memory Project as well as about the film, the website, and the support that volunteers can offer. The reason care residences hesitate to use this therapy is because staff rarely have time to take on a new project. We believe that if they have access to teams of volunteers who can help with various tasks such as obtaining the necessary equipment, identifying music for individualized playlists and downloading those playlists, the program will become available to all who can benefit! We are also looking for leaders to head up the Missoula Music & Memory Project. Viewing the film is certainly an avenue of inspiration!

Currently Partner's Hospice is using this program with their clients at home or in care residences. The Village's Pearls of Memory has purchased iPods and is in the process of getting individualized playlists downloaded. And, Edgewood Vista has been using repurposed smart phones with music for their residents for several months.

For more information or to find out how you can help, please contact:

Jackie Johnson, RN Alzheimer's Support Group Facilitator jackiej45@yahoo.com 406-549-3433
Susan Stubblefield, Senior Caregiver scsinmt@gmail.com 406-543-0531

Supplemental Information about the Missoula Music & Memory Project:

If you wish to show this film to a group of people in your school, service group or church, there is a copy approved for public showing at the Mansfield Library Media Center. It can be reserved for use by calling the Library Media Coordinator at 243-4402. If you want to show it for your own use or for your staff, etc., you don't need the public showing approved copy. You can simply purchase a DVD from Jackie (\$14) or ask Jackie or Susan for a loaner copy. The film is also available for streaming on Netflix.

Dan Cohen, the social worker who created this unique music therapy, uses iPod Shuffles which cost about \$50 each. Shawn Bennett, the Life Enrichment Coordinator at Edgewood Vista, discovered a lower cost alternative. He has been repurposing old smart phones with the favorite music of specific residents. So we will be collecting used iPods and smart phones for the project. New equipment may be purchased by families, care facilities or through fundraising.

We are looking for volunteers with different skill sets to help with the project: people who are willing to do equipment drives and fundraising; people who are tech savvy and can download individualized playlists and repurpose donated smart phones; and people who can work with individuals and their families, in care facilities or homes, to identify favorite music for the playlists.

We are also looking for someone who will take on this project in a leadership role. Because we (Jackie and Susan) believe that this program is vital to the quality of life of people living with Alzheimer's and dementia, we have been catalysts to get the word out to our community. Now, we invite someone with a passion for this work to step forward.

Thank you for your interest in the Missoula Music & Memory Project.