

## Learning to Shift from Crisis to Comfort

*Highlights from Lori LaBey's Dementia Friendly Symposium & Cruise*

*by Becky Watson, Owner – Music for Wellness, LLC*

**What an inspirational and insightful symposium with 50 individuals living with dementia!**



It was an honor to be a part of a great program team including: Michel Ellenbogen, Harry Urban, Laurie Scherrer, Mary Read, Cyndy Luzinski, Anita Jader, and Lori LaBey of Alzheimer's Speaks onboard MS Nieuw Amsterdam, Holland Cruise line, for a seven day cruise to the eastern Caribbean from November 11-17, 2017.

With much anticipation and planning, our group met onboard MS Nieuw Amsterdam on Veteran's Day to get underway. This cruise was my first "non-Navy" as a Supply Corps Officer cruise and couldn't help watching the logistics taking place with the 900 crew members in loading cargo onboard, wonderful customer service, and hospitality of the shipboard staff.



Our symposiums sessions included:

- **Morning Coffee Clutch Conversation with Lori La Bey**
- **Daily Devotion with Cyndy Luzinski** - Anchor for the Soul (Faith, Grace, Peace, Love, & Hope)
- **Wake up Through Music with Becky Watson** (connecting with music activities with egg shakers, boomwhackers, scarves, and stretchy bands)



We learned how we can shift dementia care by our actions, bringing peace and comfort to those diagnosed and those caring for them. We discussed Dementia Friendly; what it means, why we are hearing so much about it, and what global and local initiatives look like. Find out how not only your words matter, but your non-verbal communication can make or break a situation.

## - The Voices of Dementia... hearing from the Experts!!

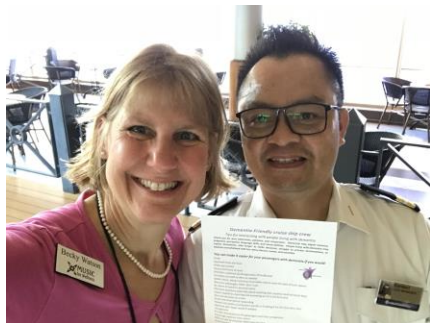
Our Dementia Panelists: Mary Howard Read, Laurie Scherrer, Michael Ellenbogen, and Harry Urban were fantastic! During the numerous voices of dementia panel discussions, insightful comments were made on the following topics and interest areas:

- Communicating and Expressing Emotions
- Expressing Anger, Frustration
- Importance of Routines
- Using Technology
- Driving



My Take away comments from these very insightful dementia panel discussions:

- #1 Fear is being alone and isolated
- Importance to have a purpose in life and living with dementia, celebrate retained abilities
- Importance of sight first, then show me, don't use a lot of words
- Don't ask direct questions, give options (i.e. let me pick from a buffet, not an a la cart menu)



**Dementia Awareness and Impact:** Our dementia friendly symposium made a positive impact with the MS Nieuw Amsterdam crew as we shared many of Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care tips for interacting with people living with dementia. Specifically, we provided handouts and shared the importance of the following: smiling, approach from the front, make eye contact, keep a kind tone of voice, maintain pleasant facial contact, introduce yourself as often as needed, speak clearly and slowly, and give your individual time and not rush for an answer.

Thank you Lori LaBey for allowing me to share the power of music to empower our guests. Visit their [website](#) for future events!