



The ASNR Advisory Group's Coffee Break Testimonial

Here at the Alzheimer Society of the Niagara Region, we have an Advisory Group that is made up of people living with dementia. Through their lived experiences, knowledge and ideas the Advisory Group ensures that our programs continue to meet the needs and choices of people living with cognitive change and dementia.

The Advisory Group also hosts their own Coffee Break fundraisers. Their events are particularly special because they can share their personal stories and educate people based on their own lived experiences with dementia.

“We want to fight the stigma of dementia and let people see the different faces of dementia – when people see us doing things still – it may change their impression of what dementia looks like” one member said.

The Advisory Group said that one of the reasons as to why they decided to host a Coffee Break fundraiser is, “To show people we are still here. We may have changed a bit but there’s a lot of things we can still do.” Another said, “It gives us the opportunity to put a face on dementia. We are people first, living with dementia – people can actually see that. I have dementia, I am not dementia.”

Another member of the Advisory Group said, “We participate in the programs that the Alzheimer Society provides and this is how we give back.” The Advisory Group also highlighted the importance of people living with dementia helping to spread awareness and educate those around them.

For their Coffee Break events, the Advisory Group placed special emphasis on sharing their personal experiences. They were able to raise awareness and facilitate some really good conversations. They were able to put on successful fundraising events that were enjoyable for everyone! They also had several dignitaries and community leaders in attendance, “They get to see what we can accomplish,” one member said.

When asked what their favourite parts of Coffee Break were, the Advisory Group gave a wealth of answers; from bringing people together and conversation over delicious goodies, to the excitement of planning the events. One member said that they loved the challenge of trying to beat their record and raise more funds at their second Coffee Break than they did at their first.



Besides the fundraising component that Coffee Break has, the Advisory Group also had a lot to say about the additional value that a Coffee Break fundraiser brings.

One member talked about the value of, “advocating, giving your time, and talents.”

Another said, “We can thank people for donating, then we can tell them how important their support is.”

For anyone who is considering hosting a Social with a Purpose event (our 2020 fundraiser replacing in-person Coffee Break), the Advisory Group suggested inviting people with dementia to speak and answer questions. Their other tip is to simply, “Be friendly and open to conversation,”