

CAMPBILL COMMUNITIES ONTARIO PRESS RELEASE:

EXPRESSIVE ARTS PROGRAM FOR WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE SOCIAL ISOLATION

DATE: October 10, 2018

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Expressive Arts Wrap Party celebrates the successful outcomes of all who told stories with their artwork. Exhibitions were held at The Camphill Store in Barrie.

“Wonderful”, “Impactful” Expressive Arts Program brings socially isolated women together.

Camphill Communities Ontario (CCO) and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) won funding via the Trillium Foundation and its funder (The Government of Ontario) to invest in an innovative program to help reduce social isolation in women. These are vulnerable, socially-detached women who lack connections to their community. Expressive Arts is a 3 month therapeutic program that seeks to help participants communicate through the use of hands on painting, pottery, printmaking, ceramics and journaling in a group setting. It’s worked remarkably well.

Participating women are first identified via intake at CMHA. Four Expressive Arts groups have been organized so far, each with a three month schedule.

The groups progress to an artistic showcase during which each woman displays her work of art, coupled with a written explanation of what her creation means. Each shadow box has been envisioned to display a theme. Each box provides its owner with an artistic medium to explore and communicate her story. In addition, 'Wisdom Cards' featuring these stories are now used in classrooms and support groups to facilitate education and therapeutic rapport.

The Expressive Arts Wrap Party at The Camphill Store, Barrie.



"Minds are like parachutes, they only function when they are open."

The results have been spectacular on many fronts. The women themselves provide telling feedback of their experiences, being able to reveal their stories at last through each group's collaborative art making. Teachers and community workers likewise have brought forward their remarkable experiences leading the women's groups. This is accomplished within a wonderful, developing partnership between Camphill and the CMHA.



One woman shows her shadow box during the Expressive Arts Wrap Party at the Camphill Store in Barrie.

CCO wishes to thank CMHA and the Trillium Foundation for their part in making this collaboration possible.

CCO is a socially progressive, not-for-profit organization that provides supports and services to adults of all abilities in Simcoe County. Camphill is known for its unique artistic and creative approaches that enhance and enrich lives.

Founded in 1952, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Ontario is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to making mental health possible for all. CMHA Ontario achieves its mission by being a leader in Ontario's mental health and addictions system.

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