Mystic Valley Aging Services
Supporting Independence. Empowering People.

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MVAS Receives Grant for New Dementia Program

I'm Still Here Foundation Awards Innovation Grant to Mystic Valley Aging Services

MALDEN, MA _ Mystic Valley Aging Services was awarded a 2026 Innovation Grant from the I'm Still Here Foundation (ISHF) to launch Resiliency in Motion: A Dementia Wellness Program.

Mystic Valley Aging Services (MVAS) developed Resiliency in Motion for people with dementia alongside a family member who supports them. The goal is to provide participants with an opportunity to remain active, creative, and connected.

"This grant allows us to meet people exactly where they are and remind them, and their families, of everything they can still do," said Lisa Felci Jimenez, MVAS Director of Clinical Services. "We are honored to be part of the I'm Still Here Foundation's work and to bring this program to our community."

Resiliency in Motion will be held in six weekly sessions, led by a certified fitness professional alongside dementia-trained support staff. Mystic Valley Aging Services will partner with Julio Salado, who has extensive experience in fitness coaching for older adults.

MVAS is one of seven organizations selected nationwide for ISHF's 2026–2027 Innovation Grant cycle, chosen from a competitive national pool of applicants. Each grantee receives seed funding and mentorship to bring their project to life, incorporating the "I'm Still Here" philosophy — the conviction that people can live well with dementia — into their program.

In addition to providing seed funding, ISHF partners with grantees by providing mentorship, guidance, and sharing research-backed best practices. By helping innovative ideas grow and disseminating successful approaches to the community, ISHF works to ensure that all people living with dementia can experience connection, purpose, dignity, and hope.

"Hope in Action is more than a slogan — it is the guiding principle behind everything we do," said Sharon Johnson, Executive Director of the I'm Still Here Foundation. "Organizations like Mystic Valley Aging Services demonstrate what is possible when we focus on strengths, abilities, and opportunities rather than limitations. Their work reminds us that people living with dementia can continue to experience purpose, connection, growth, and joy throughout their dementia journey."

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Established in 1975, Mystic Valley Aging Services is a non-profit agency that supports the right of older adults and people with disabilities to live with dignity and independence in the community, while assisting and supporting their family caregivers. For more information, please call 781-324-7705 or visit www.mysticvalleyaging.org.

Founded in 1995 by Dr. John Zeisel, the I'm Still Here Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that helps communities and organizations implement research-informed, non-pharmacologic engagement programs that enable people living with dementia to continue to experience connection, dignity, and hope. ISHF works in close partnership with Hopeful Aging LLC, a National Institutes of Health-funded leader in non-pharmacologic dementia research, also founded by Dr. John Zeisel. Learn more at imstillhere.org.