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# November

## IS NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S AND NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER MONTH

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There are over 5 million Americans in the United States living with Alzheimer's disease. Over 100 million people have been touched by the disease. Alzheimer's disease is the seventh leading cause of death for people of all ages and the fifth leading cause for adults over age 65 following heart disease, cancer, cerebrovascular disease, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and COVID-19.

It is estimated that one to four family members act as caregivers for each individual with Alzheimer's disease. More than 40% of North Carolina caregivers take care of someone with a memory disorder like Alzheimer's disease. Their "caregiving career" will last an average of 8 years but may be as long as twenty.

In North Carolina, it is estimated that more than 180,000 older adults currently

have Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia. Over the next 20 years, this number is expected to increase to 300,000 residents. More than 80% of people with Alzheimer's disease live at home and are cared for by family and friends.

**Candlelight Reflections** was designed to honor individuals affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, as well as family caregivers. We invite communities and organizations across the state to participate in and/or host an event.

We hope that the flame of each candle will bring to light the growing number of individuals living with dementia and the critical need for support of family caregivers.

**For more information or assistance with your **Candlelight Reflections** event, call **Dementia Alliance of North Carolina** at **(919) 832-3732** or visit **dementianc.org**.**

Or contact your local Area Agency on Aging. A list of regional Area Agency on Aging contacts can be found at [www.ncdhhs.gov/aging/aaa.htm](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/aging/aaa.htm)



# Candlelight Reflections

**To honor those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia, those we have lost, and the many who have and are providing care for them.**

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*When you light your candle tonight, light it not only in memory and support of your loved one, but light it in hope and commitment as well.*

*— Chris Adkins, in honor of his father*

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**Candlelight Reflections** began as a way to bring together families, friends, and supporters and to increase awareness about dementia and its effects on families. **Candlelight Reflections** honors all families and friends taking on the role of caregiving and/or living with dementia. **Candlelight Reflections** is an especially fitting way to begin November, National and North Carolina Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, and Family Caregiver Month.

**Candlelight Reflections** can:

- build awareness in the community about the valuable contributions and unique needs of family caregivers;
- help educate the public about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, dementia care, and available support services;
- elicit support for state and federal legislation to strengthen support for family caregivers;
- encourage positive changes in the workplace to support caregiving families and individuals with dementia;

- create opportunities for volunteer recruitment as well as "neighbor helping neighbor" efforts;
- motivate people in the community to become more involved in local Alzheimer's awareness activities and other ways to support family caregivers; and
- provide an opportunity to share messages and educational resources with local media, faith communities, and other interested organizations.

We challenge you to think broadly when planning a **Candlelight Reflections** event in your community. Families, individuals, corporations, small businesses, public officials, educators, human service agencies, faith communities, associations, health clubs, healthcare professionals, civic and social clubs, etc., are among the vast array of possibilities to include in your event.

People are encouraged to participate in **Candlelight Reflections** as a means of demonstrating respect, concern, and support for family caregivers and those affected by Alzheimer's disease and dementia.



# Candlelight Reflections

## GETTING STARTED

### What will you need?

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#### EVENT CHAIRMAN

- forms a working committee

#### LOGISTICS COORDINATOR

- finds a location
- gets permits if needed
- secures a sound system
- secures adequate parking

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR

- contacts local media to enhance potential pre- and post-event coverage and attendance

#### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

- registers and trains volunteers
- distributes promotional and event materials
- makes phone calls
- supports the requests of the Event Chairman



# Candlelight Reflections

## PULLING IT TOGETHER

**Plan ahead with 60 days lead time if possible.  
Be creative and involve volunteers and the community.**

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**Establish Date and Time:** The first Thursday of November, beginning at 6:00-6:30 p.m. (The start and end time may vary due to local considerations.) The official lighting of the candles will take place at 7:00 p.m. whenever possible.

**Location:** Possibilities may include community centers, hospitals, long-term care facilities, civic buildings, schools, houses of worship, town squares, or any site that is easily accessible by large numbers of people.

**Permits:** Check with local officials regarding permits that may be necessary for the event.

**Sound System:** Guest speakers will probably require microphones.

**Parking/Safety:** Since most events will be held at night, check to make sure that sites have ample and secure parking nearby. Enlist volunteers, especially for public areas, to help participants park quickly and safely. Be sure to consider the amount of handicapped accessible parking as well.

**Rain Contingency:** Planning for bad weather is important. For outdoor events, alternative locations should be secured in the event of rain or inclement weather. If more than one organization is conducting a Candlelight Reflections event in your area, consider sharing promotional efforts and contingency plans.

☐

**Materials:** Try to solicit local merchants, community leaders, or other organizations for candle donations. List them in your program as sponsors, friends, supporters, etc. Additionally, you may want to have colored lapel ribbons, buttons, flowers, or some other symbolic item to serve as reminders/advertising tools before your event. These items can also be distributed to attendees during the program itself.

☐

**Funding:** Will depend on local activities. Plan accordingly.

☐

**Media:** See information on "Promotion" on the following page.



# Candlelight Reflections

## PROMOTION

**November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and Family Caregiver Month. To kick off the month of recognition, Dementia Alliance of North Carolina hosts **Candlelight Reflections** events on the first Thursday of November each year.**

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**Candlelight Reflections** is a collaborative effort to heighten public awareness about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and the need to recognize and support family caregivers. This statewide event is an opportunity to remember those whose lives have been lost to Alzheimer's as well as to honor those individuals and families who are presently living with dementia. It is also an important time to express gratitude and appreciation to all family caregivers for their invaluable contributions.

Each county is encouraged to host local **Candlelight Reflections** events on the first Thursday evening of November. If that evening is not possible, please select an alternate time or day during the first week of November.

**The success of your event will depend on how you promote and coordinate it.**

Promotional efforts may include:

- **Press Releases:** Consider sending to radio and TV stations and daily and weekly newspapers.
- **Special Interest Stories:** A local family or individual may wish to share their own experience with caregiving and/or living with dementia. Attempt to get a staff writer to help write a feature article or possibly a series before and during the month of November. The series could include a variety of caregiving situations and personal stories.
- **Frequent Announcements:** Contact faith-based and other local organizations with newsletters, websites, group email lists, etc., to announce the event and include it in programs and mailings.
- **Support Groups:** Ask facilitators of local support groups to notify all members about the event and to help recruit participants.
- **Spread the Word:** Send updated information to Dementia Alliance of North Carolina ([info@dementianc.org](mailto:info@dementianc.org)), to post on websites, feature in newsletters, and on social media.
- **Promotional Flyer:** Consider creating a colorful flyer to draw attention to your event. Please share with [infodementianc.org](http://infodementianc.org).



# Candlelight Reflections

## MAXIMIZE TURNOUT

### Who to Invite

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- Local Caregiver Support Groups
- Directors and Personnel of Long-Term Care Communities
- Leaders and Members of the Faith Community
- Health and Human Service Professionals (e.g., Adult Day Service Providers, Home Care and Hospice Agencies, Senior Centers, etc.)
- Local Aging & Departments of Social Services Staff
- City/County Government Officials
- Aging Advocates
- Civic and Professional Groups
- Local Celebrities

In addition:

- Local organizations may offer to serve as co-sponsors. Encourage as much collaboration and community involvement as possible.
- For each person or group you contact, be sure to encourage everyone to bring a friend.
- Consider Respite Care: Family members may wish to attend but are obligated to stay home and care for their relative. If respite care can be arranged, let them know the service is available as a way of supporting and honoring all of their caregiving efforts.



# Candlelight Reflections

## SUGGESTED PROGRAM

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The following is a suggested program format:

- **Inspirational music:** Play before the event as people arrive.
- **Welcoming Remarks:** Consider having the opening remarks given by a local celebrity or community leader, or an Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Family Caregiver Support Program Specialist.
- **Updates:** Alzheimer's and family caregiver information and/or programs and services available through the NC Family Caregiver Support Program, your local AAA, or other local caregiver groups.
- **Governor's Proclamation:** Annual gubernatorial proclamations will be available for sharing at your event - [governor.nc.gov/news/procs](http://governor.nc.gov/news/procs).
- **President's Proclamation:** Annual presidential proclamations will be available for sharing at your event - [whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions](http://whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions)
- **Readings:** Sample Readings are included in this packet. You are welcome to choose a different poem or select another type of inspirational reading. Consider asking a person with early dementia or a caregiver to read the poem or share something they have written.
- **Time of Reflection or Moment of Silence:** This might be followed by another inspirational reading.
- **The Lighting of Candles:** The designated time for lighting candles is 7 p.m. You are welcome to select an alternate time as needed.
- **Optional Naming Ritual:** As candles are being lit, people may want to say names aloud as special recognition or in remembrance. This is sometimes done one at a time, standing in a circle or oval with participants lighting their candle from the one before.
- **Inspirational Music:** Play as the event closes and everyone leaves.



# Candlelight Reflections

## FOLLOW UP

**Write or call to thank those involved in the promotion, coordination, and production of your event. This will encourage future involvement and interest.**

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- Committee Members
- Your Honorary Chairperson(s)
- Volunteers
- Media Staff
- Sponsors and Supporters
- Site Host(s)
- Event Speakers
- Special Guests
- Individuals and Family Members who took the time to participate.

Consider placing a thank you letter in local newspapers, local radio calendar, event shows, etc.

Following are a sample of prayers, poems, readings and songs you might use as part of your program. Please use copyright information where provided.

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## ALZHEIMER'S PRAYER

Great Creator,  
We pray.  
For those who have died of  
Alzheimer's disease

Peace —  
For those who now struggle with  
Alzheimer's disease

Dignity and Comfort —  
For Families, Caregivers, Friends, and  
Supporters

Compassion and Courage —  
And for those who seek the cause,  
cure, prevention,  
and treatment of Alzheimer's disease

Our Sincerest Thanks —  
Please accept our earnest and  
humble prayer.

Amen

## PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lord,  
Make me an instrument of your  
peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow  
love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light; and  
where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master,  
Grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled  
as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are  
pardoned;  
And it is in dying that we are born to  
eternal life.  
Amen

## **A CAREGIVER'S PRAYER**

By W. Scott Waterhouse

Lord,  
Show me the strength within me because  
I am very tired,  
Show me patience to care for the one I love,  
Show me peace of mind as I struggle through each  
day and night,  
Show me the joy in the little things my loved one  
does to help me out,  
Show me love when anger wants  
to take over my thoughts,  
Show me compassion when my  
loved one becomes frustrated,  
Show me hope when I can see no hope,  
And Lord, show me kindness  
for those who care about me.  
Amen

## A PRAYER FROM A CAREGIVER

Dear Father in Heaven,  
Please help me today  
To find courage and strength  
And to watch what I say.  
Make me gentle and kind  
And have a big heart  
Give me endurance, fortitude,  
Be merciful and smart.  
I'm asking for someone  
Who can't fold hands in prayer;  
But they are your children  
And know that you're there.  
Let the ones I care for  
Know of my love.  
Help them today  
From Heaven above.  
Asking all this In God's name.  
Amen.

*Adapted from "A Caregiver's Prayer" by Shirley Procell*



### REMEMBER ME

Do not discuss me as if I am not present.

My mind is foggy but my heart is clear.

Do not criticize my imperfections.

If only I could choose to remember even the simplest of tasks.

Do not resent my frequent repetitive questions. I am scared and confused. Your answers slip from my desperate grasp.

Do not stop loving me because my actions are inappropriate.

Use patience and kindness to remind me of my manners for they have disappeared with other fragments of my mind.

Do not resent my frequent pacing or attempts to "go home." This is not my home. Nothing here is familiar or reassuring.

If only I could go home, I would surely find my memory there.

Do not remind me of my recent hurts. I do not recall that my mate has passed or my house burned to the ground.

Do not speak to me as a child. I have a lifetime of experiences despite my childlike ways.

Remind me of your name and the place you hold in my life. I would love to recall, for I feel your love and kindness.

Show me the world—nature, music, art—for I have forgotten the amazing joy it holds.

Allow me to use the tools that remain, to hammer out my mark and unwrench my heart.

Forgive me for my imperfect past; If only I remembered, I would surely apologize.

You need not fill our time with many words. Your presence helps fill my void.

The blame does not lie with you or me.

Love me for who I am now and the person I used to be.

— J. Al-hafez, June 1997



### NC CAREGIVERS PRAYER

*The following poem was written by Poet Laureate Kathryn Stripling Byer. This poem is written about a dear friend of the author who was disabled by a stroke in her later life. Willa Mae was a quilter whose spirit lives on in her handiwork. As you read this poem, you can see how Ms. Byer uses the quilt and the act of quilting as a symbol of warmth, love, and the pieces that bind the family together as their lives change*

Hands All Around  
was Willa Mae's favorite quilt pattern,  
mine too, because I loved each one she quilted,  
the way it showed what we must do for each other—  
creating the stitchery that love binds, our hands  
reaching out to make something to shelter within,  
take our comfort inside when the days  
and nights seem much too long,  
much too difficult to be understood without  
making some beautiful thing from our losses and  
gifts, our despair and our strength,  
all of them gathered up into a pattern  
of simple connection, a patchwork  
of day by day living our lives,  
piecing moment by moment together,  
a comfort to pull up around us  
when we feel the wind on our faces,  
see night falling outside. We shelter inside  
what our hands make, remembering what keeps us warm  
during dark times, what helps us keep holding on,  
reaching out, each to the other, for dear life.

*Willa Mae Pressley lived in Cullowhee, NC, a quilter of note and a dear friend of mine. Her mother, Delphia Potts, taught her to quilt when she was a child, and she carried that tradition into the present day, until disabled by a stroke she was no longer able to hold a needle. Her spirit lives on in her handiwork.*

## STILL ALL THERE

By Henry Walker | (August 31, 2003)

for most of this last decade  
Alzheimer's has been  
taking Mother away  
and I've worked to get to her still  
and I've worked to figure out  
what all's happening,

I've written of paranoia and anger,  
the loss of mobility—body and word,  
I've written also, often,  
of how much isn't lost,

Well-meaning folks have advised me  
it's not her here anymore,  
the insidious alchemy of disease  
changing her at the core of herself,  
but my intuition begs to disagree  
as it feels more right to me that self  
endures strong in her and that self  
still is connected to us all  
despite the topsy-turvy tumbling of  
neuronic pathways gone awry,

the more common question to me:  
"How is she?" and close on its heels:  
"Does she still know you?"

and most seem satisfied with no real  
answer to the first  
just some variation and details on  
"She's fine..."

and the answer to the question  
seems to tell them  
if she's still close enough  
to be worth care,

even so far along in Alzheimer's  
cluttered desk  
my wife and I feel who Mother  
"Is" is still all there  
hiding away in dreamy sleep  
and when awake without logical,  
linguistic pathways  
to cross the trackless wood  
between her "there" and our "here,"

her eyes and heart can  
still cross with ease  
and sometimes still even  
her words mostly work,

she still knows "who" she is,  
it's "where" that scares her,  
not knowing exactly "what"  
is happening,

and if we look to her with our heart  
we can still get to a Mother all there.

**THE MEANING OF MY LIFE**

By W. Scott Waterhouse

If I've helped a stranger  
Then my life has had meaning,  
If I've given hope to a friend  
Then my life has had meaning,  
If I've saved one lost soul  
Then my life has had meaning,  
If my laughter has lifted the  
spirited of another  
Then my life has had meaning,  
If my life can save someone else  
Then my life has had true  
meaning.

**LOVE IS THE KEY**

By W. Scott Waterhouse

Love is what I feel when  
you smile or touch my hand,  
Love is how we know each other's  
thoughts and understand,  
Love is all the good times shared  
with happiness all can see,  
Love is what you mean to me –  
and, love will always be the key.

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## COURAGE

By W. Scott Waterhouse

C is for the care my loved ones  
give to me,

O is for overseeing my every  
want and need,

U is for understanding the fears  
I feel inside,

R is for remembering how  
precious life can be,

A is for adapting to an ever  
changing life,

G is for the good-will you show  
to me each day, and,

E is for the endless love my  
family shows to me.

## A PRAYER FOR PEACE

By W. Scott Waterhouse

Dear Lord, I pray this day for  
friends, loved ones and those I have not  
met,

I pray for a special kind of peace,  
A peace that can be found in each  
and every person,

The peace that is found in the heart  
and soul of everyone,

Let this peace show them they are  
not alone and will never be forsaken,  
Give these courageous individuals a  
moment of peace to know that your  
love will always be with them,

By receiving this peace that can be  
found in a smile or touch they will know  
someone

loves and cares for them,  
By this, they will feel God's spirit watching  
over them, protecting  
them and waiting for them with open arms,  
This I ask in your most precious name,  
Amen.

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## **BEATITUDES FOR FRIENDS OF THE AGED**

By Esther Mary Walker

Blessed are they who understand  
My faltering step and palsied hand.

Blessed are they who know that my ears today  
Must strain to catch the things they say.

Blessed are they who seem to know  
That my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.

Blessed are they who looked away  
When coffee spilled at table today.

Blessed are they with a cheery smile  
Who stopped to chat for a little while.

Blessed are they who never say,  
"You've told that story twice today."

Blessed are they who know the ways  
To bring back memories of yesterdays.

Blessed are they who make it known  
That I'm loved, respected, and not alone.

*Published and copyrighted by O.S.V. Publications in Huntington, Indiana in 1960*

## AS MY MEMORY FADES

By Stephanie Brown

As my memory fades  
Listen to my heart  
It's still beating

As my memory fades  
Reflect on my past  
And know that I did something with my life

As my memory fades  
Call my name  
I deserve your respect

As my memory fades  
I might forget to say thank you  
Know that you are appreciated  
For taking care of me

As my memory fades  
Love only comes from my heart beat  
Just listen as it sings a song of love  
Just for you

## A CAREGIVER THANK YOU

By Kathryn Meyer

I thought of you the other day,  
when you weren't even around.  
You're a person who's sincere and true;  
whose heart is warm and sound.  
In daylight you offer a guiding hand;  
at night a listening ear.  
You face many challenges along the way;  
your kindness keeps you near.  
Preparing and caring for two is extra work each day.  
Yet these are the things you continue to do,  
and not for prize or pay.  
I witness your devotion,  
even when frustrations do arise.  
I honor your time and efforts,  
the concern that's deep in your eyes.  
Your loved one may not say thank you;  
perhaps they don't know how.  
Please accept this heartfelt acknowledgement,  
from me to you right now.

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## ALZHEIMER'S HERO By Valerie Stephenson

You entered my world extending your hand,  
Reaching for the "me" that I had lost.  
You helped me remember who I am  
With kind and gentle reminders  
Of the memories composing my life.

You took the time to know me  
Beyond the intricacies of my disease—  
You helped me find my way, each day,  
Easing my fears,  
Helping me feel that I still belong.

You overlooked my daily confusion,  
Understanding the rage, giving me comfort.  
You walked along with me, not for me,  
Helping me face the day  
With a sense of dignity and a semblance of pride.

My memory fades,  
But I know when someone cares.  
And I know when I look into your eyes  
That you are my hero.  
For you are faithful, you are strong,  
And you respect the best of who I am.  
And I know that your belief and steadfastness

Have allowed me to rediscover  
The strength and courage  
Of the hero that lies within me.

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## IN YOUR HEART

By Thomas S. Carver

He was so proud of his little girl  
It was her very first day of school  
He walked with her to school that day  
And she held his hand all the way  
They walked together quiet and sad  
A little girl and her loving dad  
Into the school her father led  
But he almost cried when she said  
Daddy, Daddy please don't go  
Don't leave me here all alone  
I'll miss you if you go away  
And I might need you, can't you stay  
Little Daughter please don't cry  
You'll be okay so dry your eyes  
You have our memories in your heart  
We're together though we're apart

He sat up front on her wedding day  
And cried as his daughter walked away  
Later that night he watched her dance  
He sat there waiting for his chance  
The band started to play their song  
Father and daughter danced along  
She looked at him and saw a tear  
Then leaned and whispered in his ear

Daddy, Daddy I have to go  
I hate to leave you all alone  
I'll miss you when I go away  
But if you need me then I'll stay  
Little Daughter I'll be just fine  
I'll love you always you are mine  
I have our memories in my heart  
We're together though we're apart

She came in his room  
and kissed his head  
Then sat next to his hospital bed  
He took her hand and held it tight  
And wished he had the strength to fight  
They sat together quiet and sad  
A daughter and her dying dad  
He saw the tears she tried to hide  
She looked at him and then she cried  
Daddy, Daddy please don't go  
Don't leave me here all alone  
I'll miss you when you go away  
I still need you, you have to stay  
Little Daughter I love you so  
I want to stay but have to go  
I'll always be here in your heart  
We're together though we're apart

Source: *We're Together Though We're Apart, In Your Heart, Daughter Poem*  
[www.FamilyFriendPoems.com](http://www.FamilyFriendPoems.com)



## IN CASE I FORGET

by Lisa J. Schlitt

In case I forget to kiss you goodnight,  
Or hold your hand gently in mine,  
Just wrap me tightly inside your arms,  
And remember the happier times.

In case I forget when glancing at you,  
The one, who makes me complete,  
Alzheimer's may have won with my mind,  
But my heart it will never defeat.

In case I forget the children we've raised,  
Or the hundreds of stories I've told,  
Shed not a tear, "for blessed are we,  
Who forget one day we are old."

In case I forget to tell you how much,  
You're cherished and treasured each day.  
My best friend beside me to brighten the path,  
And carry me all of the way.

I may greet you someday, with questioning eyes  
As a stranger with whom I've just met,  
Still, I love you my darling with all of my heart,  
Remember.....In case I forget.

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Subscribe to their free weekly e-newsletter at [caregiver.com](http://caregiver.com).*

## ADA by Craig Judd - 2013

There once was a woman named ADA  
she was the one true love of my life.  
I loved her so much I wasn't ashamed  
I even told my wife.  
She taught me how to be a man and  
respect all others in life.  
She taught me all the important things  
that a grown man needs to succeed.

The first thing she taught was that love  
conquers all  
The second thing she taught me was that  
God loves us all  
The third thing was to treat others  
the way you would like to be treated.  
Fourth: Help those in need and be there  
when someone needs a hand.

Sometime after I turned thirty five  
I noticed some things weren't right  
She'd leave the gas on the stove on, and the  
water running with the stopper in the sink.  
It wasn't long before I knew the Ada that  
once had loved and nurtured me was the one  
needing a helping hand.  
From then I became the one to comfort,  
love and care.

During the next waning years of her life  
she didn't know my name.  
But her eyes lit up and sparkled as I hugged  
and called her name.  
Sometimes I was Uncle Mike, or Bobby or  
sometimes I was someone I didn't even know.  
She taught me how to love and laugh and  
enjoy the times we had.

Because when I left I always got a hug and  
the sparkle in her eyes let me know my  
visit was a success.

The night that my sweet Ada died there is  
something you should know!  
She didn't know me and that's OK  
because she knew much more.  
Till her last dying breath she was saying  
her rosary prayers and at peace to be with  
our Lord.

Today I am 64 and blessed beyond all belief.  
I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's  
in December of last year.  
I have chosen to speak about this disease  
and let the whole world know.  
I know that at some time in the future  
my memory will truly fade.  
But for now I have Alzheimer's disease -  
The disease does not have me!!

I still do volunteer work and wrote  
this in one try.  
I still do carpentry and household chores  
and build handicap ramps and decks.  
I still teach youth how to rehab homes  
and take care of those in need.  
With the Loving power and grace of God  
I will continue to do what I do.  
And when the time comes that I can't  
continue it isn't because I did not try.  
It's because our good and gracious Lord  
has told me I passed the test!!

So now I say to all of those who have had  
or has this disease.  
May God's love and grace be with you  
and your caregivers as well!!

I Have Dementia.  
My eyes do see, My ears do hear  
I am still me, So let's be clear  
My memory may fade,  
My walk may slow  
I am ME inside  
Don't let me go.

[www.keepinmindinc.com](http://www.keepinmindinc.com)

The person with dementia is not  
giving you a hard time.  
The person with dementia is  
having a hard time.

*Kerry Kleinbergen,  
Early Onset Alzheimer's Disease*

## 10 WAYS TO LOVE...

Listen  
Without interrupting

Speak  
Without accusing

Give  
Without sparing

Pray  
Without ceasing

Answer  
Without arguing

Share  
Without pretending

Enjoy  
Without complaint

Trust  
Without wavering

Forgive  
Without punishing

Promise  
Without forgetting

*The Bible*



## BE GENTLE WITH THOSE IN YOUR CARE

By Brenda Race

Did you ever wake up feeling confused or out of place?  
It isn't a feeling that is very nice  
Not knowing where you are or what day it would be  
Struggling with your thoughts... trying to see.

Try to imagine that feeling... never going away  
Trying to find your place every single day.  
Trying so hard to remember why  
And the only answer you get is a sigh.

Daylight is here and it's not so bad  
But then... why oh why are you so sad?  
No one around you seems to know  
They don't seem to know you have places to go.

If only you could find some face you knew  
Just what would you do if this happened to you?  
Step into my shoes for only a day  
Perhaps you will know why I run away.

What would you do if you could no longer tie your shoes  
And when it's time to dress you don't know what to do  
What if you didn't know when or how to shower,  
A task so great that perhaps you too would cower.

If I strike out and seem to be mean  
Perhaps it is over things that can't be seen.  
Step into my shoes for only a day  
Maybe then you will see why I act this way  
So please remember as you care for me today  
Treat me with kindness and love in every way  
Be patient and tender as you guide me along my way  
Step into my shoes for only a day.



## MAYBE

Author Unknown - shared by Norman "Norrms" McNamara & Brenda Avadian, MA

When I wander don't tell me to come and sit down.  
Wander with me.  
It may be because I am hungry, thirsty, need the toilet, or  
maybe I just need to stretch my legs.

When I call for my mother (even though I'm ninety!)  
don't tell me she has died.  
Reassure me, cuddle me, ask me about her.  
It may be that I am looking for the security that my mother once  
gave me.

When I shout out please don't ask me to be quiet... or walk by.  
I am trying to tell you something, but have difficulty in telling you  
what.  
Be patient. Try to find out.  
I may be in pain.

When I become agitated or appear angry,  
please don't reach for the drugs first.  
I am trying to tell you something.  
It may be too hot, too bright, too noisy.  
Or maybe it's because I miss my loved ones.  
Try to find out first.

When I don't eat my dinner or drink my tea it may be because  
I've forgotten how to.  
Show me what to do, remind me.  
It may be that I just need to hold my knife and fork  
I may know what to do then.

When I push you away while you're trying to help me wash or  
get dressed, maybe it's because I've forgotten what you have said.  
Keep telling me what you are doing over and over and over.  
Maybe others will think you're the one that needs help

With all my thoughts and maybes, perhaps it will be you who  
reaches my thoughts, understands my fears, and will make me feel  
safe.

Maybe it will be you who I need to thank. If only I knew how.

## ELLSWORTH A Song by Rascal Flatts

Grandma burned the biscuits  
Nearly took the house down with it  
Now she's in assisted living  
We all knew that day would come

We knew she was too gone to drive  
The day she parked on I-65  
Found her on the shoulder cryin'  
She didn't know where she was

It's like her mind just quit  
Oh, but bring up grandpa  
It's like someone flipped a switch

A front porch light and a blue Desoto  
A couple of straws and a Coca-Cola,  
you can see it all going down  
A handsome boy in army green,  
a tear on his face, down on a knee  
Shaky voice, a diamond ring,  
she'll put you in that town

Tomorrow she won't remember  
what she did today  
But just ask her about  
Ellsworth, Kansas, 1948

She takes out his medals  
A cigar box of letters  
Sits and scatters pictures  
Black and whites of days gone by

We started losin' her when she lost him  
But to hear her carry on  
You'd swear she's seventeen again  
Football games and leaves a cracklin'  
Walkin' her home in his letter jacket,  
you can see it all going down

A perfect night on a front porch glider  
Sayin' goodnight for the next 3 hours  
Her tired eyes go wide and bright,  
when she talks about that town

Tomorrow she won't remember  
what she did today  
But just ask her about  
Ellsworth, Kansas, 1948

While the world is fading all around her  
Sharing a sundae at the counter  
He's going on and on about her  
Bet she's right there right now

Tomorrow she won't remember  
what she did today  
But just ask about  
Ellsworth, Kansas, 1948

*Songwriters*  
MOBLEY, WENDELL LEE/DULANEY,  
MICHAEL WILLIAM/THRASHER, NEIL

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## RAYMOND A Song by Brett Eldrege

I work down at Ashberry Hills, Minimum wage, but it pays the bills  
Cleaning floors and leading hymns on Sunday

Katherine Davis, room 303, Sweetest soul you ever could meet  
I bring her morning coffee everyday

She calls me Raymond, She thinks I'm her son  
Tells me get washed up for supper, before your daddy gets home  
She goes on about the weather  
how she can't believe it's already 1943  
She calls me Raymond, and that's all right by me

She talks about clothes on the line in the summer air  
Christmas morning and Thanksgiving prayer  
Stories of a family that I never had

When she calls me Raymond, She thinks I'm her son  
Tells me get washed up for supper, before your daddy gets home  
She goes on about the weather  
how she can't believe it's already 1943  
She calls me Raymond, and that's all right by me

There's a small white cross in Arlington, Reads Raymond Davis '71  
Until she can see his face again, I'm gonna fill in the best I can

When she calls me Raymond, She thinks I'm her son  
Tells me get washed up for supper, before your daddy gets home

She goes on about the weather  
how she can't believe it's already 1943  
She calls me Raymond, and that's all right by me  
She calls me Raymond, and that's all right by me

*Songwriters: TRUMAN BRADLEY CRISLER, BRETT RYAN ELDRIDGE*

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## ON THE DEATH OF THE BELOVED

By John O'Donohue

Though we need to weep your loss,  
You dwell in that safe place  
in our hearts,  
Where no storm or night or pain  
can reach you.

Your love was like the dawn  
Brightening over our lives  
Awakening beneath the dark  
further adventure of colour.

The sound of your voice  
Found for us  
An new music  
That brightened everything.

Whatever you enfolded in your gaze  
Quickened in the joy of its being  
You placed smiles like flowers  
On the altar of the heart.  
Your mind always sparkled  
With wonder at things.

Though your days here were brief,  
Your spirit was live, awake, complete.

We look towards each other no longer  
From the old distance of our names;  
Now you dwell inside the rhythm of  
breath,  
As close to us as we are to ourselves.

Though we cannot see you with  
Outward eyes,  
We know our soul's gaze  
is upon your face,  
Smiling back at us  
from within everything  
To which we bring our best refinement.

Let us not look for you only in memory,  
Where we would grow lonely  
without you.  
You would want us to find  
you in presence,  
Beside us when beauty brightens,  
When kindness glows  
And music echoes eternal tones.

When orchids brighten the earth,  
Darkest winter has turned to spring;  
May this dark grief flower with hope  
In every heart that loves you.

May you continue to inspire us:  
To enter each day with a generous heart.  
To serve the call of courage and love  
Until we see your beautiful face again  
In that land where there is no more  
separation,  
Where all tears will be wiped from  
We look towards each other no longer  
our mind,  
And where we will never lose you again.

## THE GATES OF HOPE

By Victoria Safford

Our mission is to plant ourselves at the gates of Hope—  
Not the prudent gates of Optimism,  
Which are somewhat narrower.  
Not the stalwart, boring gates of Common Sense;  
Nor the strident gates of Self-Righteousness,  
Which creak on shrill and angry hinges  
(People cannot hear us there; they cannot pass through)  
Nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of  
“Everything is gonna’ be all right.”  
But a different, sometimes lonely place,  
The place of truth-telling,  
About your own soul first of all and its condition.  
The place of resistance and defiance,  
The piece of ground from which you see the world  
Both as it is and as it could be  
As it will be;  
The place from which you glimpse not only struggle,  
But the joy of the struggle.  
And we stand there, beckoning and calling,  
Telling people what we are seeing  
Asking people what they see.



## OLDER, YOUNGER, BOTH

By Joyce Sutphen

I feel older, younger, both  
at once. Every time I win,  
I lose. Every time I count,  
I forget and must begin again.

I must begin again, and again I  
must begin. Every time I lose,  
I win and must begin again.

Everything I plan must wait, and  
having to wait has made me old, and  
the older I get, the more I wait, and everything  
I'm waiting for has already been planned.

I feel sadder, wiser, neither  
together. Everything is almost  
true, and almost true is everywhere.  
I feel sadder, wiser, neither at once.

I end in beginning, in ending I find  
that beginning is the first thing to do.  
I stop when I start, but my heart keeps on beating,  
so I must go on starting in spite of the stopping.

I must stop my stopping and start to start—  
I can end at the beginning or begin at the end.  
I feel older, younger, both at once.

## TWO MOTHERS REMEMBERED

By Joann Snow Duncanson

I had two Mothers - two Mothers I claim  
Two different people, yet with the same name.  
Two separate women, diverse by design,  
But I loved them both because they were mine.

The first was the Mother who carried me here,  
Gave birth and nurtured and launched my career.  
She was the one whose features I bear,  
Complete with the facial expressions I wear.

She gave her love, which follows me yet,  
Along with the examples in life she set.  
As I got older, she somehow younger grew,  
And we'd laugh as just Mothers and daughters do.

But then came the time that her mind clouded so,  
And I sensed that the Mother I knew would soon go.  
So quickly she changed and turned into the other,  
A stranger who dressed in the clothes of my Mother.

Oh, she looked the same, at least at arm's length,  
But now she was the child and I was her strength.  
We'd come full circle, we women three,  
My Mother the first, the second and me.

And if my own children should come to a day,  
When a new Mother comes and the old goes away,  
I'd ask of them nothing that I didn't do.  
Love both of your Mothers as both loved you.



Dementia Alliance of North Carolina believes everyone impacted by dementia deserves the resources to have an optimal quality of life and hope until there is a world without Dementia. Recognizing the profound impact of dementia, including Alzheimer's, on more than 210,500 people in North Carolina, we strive to build a state of caring that addresses the unique needs of our community.

Serving as the go-to resource for local support, information, and education on dementia-related diseases, including Alzheimer's, we approach our mission with a local focus, ensuring that 100 percent of donated funds remain within the state, directly benefiting those we serve. Our experienced team, deeply committed to supporting individuals and families facing dementia-related challenges, works tirelessly to build a state of caring, one caregiver, one individual, and one interaction at a time. By fostering partnerships with organizations, educators, researchers, and communities, we aim to create a powerful alliance dedicated to serving everyone impacted by dementia and building a compassionate state in North Carolina. Together, we believe that by joining forces, we can uplift each other and work towards a world without dementia.

## OUR PROGRAMS

**Dementia Navigation & Care Consultation:** Our Dementia Navigators are trained to assess the specific needs of dementia caregivers and provide information, referrals and other forms of caregiver assistance.

**Dementia Caregiver Assistance Program:** This program is designated to help families throughout the state receive a one time financial assistance grant during a time of need, allowing caregivers temporary relief (respite) or resources for their caregiving journey.

**Support Groups:** Our Caregiver Support Groups offer a supportive community where caregivers can openly express their emotions, find solutions to common caregiving challenges in dementia, and access expert advice. They are a lifeline for caregivers seeking understanding, knowledge, and emotional relief on their caregiving journey.

**Dementia Education:** We provide in-person and online education for families and professional caregivers. By attending these workshops, conferences, and support groups, caregivers experience reduced stress and improved quality of life.

**Music & Memory at Home:** This evidence-based program helps people living with dementia find renewed joy and connection through personalized musical favorites.

**Research:** Dementia Alliance of North Carolina invests in funding research efforts that address important issues ranging across a broad spectrum of concerns in the field of dementia science and care.