

Winds Of Change

We had a walk through Cockington Village today and as we walked through the most picturesque village you can ever imagine, with Thatched cottages and woodlands, as we turned a corner, the wind came from nowhere. It hit us face on and took my breath away just for a second. As you know by now, this got me thinking.

Without warning and from nowhere, came this force of nature, no sound, no sirens, no bells ringing out and always invisible, just a force to be reckoned with, if only for a few seconds. If only "Dementia" was "just for a few seconds"?

For most people this disease creeps upon them and like the wind, there is no noise, no warning signs, just the few forgetful moments here and there until it becomes a serious problem. I know when I first started to forget things I just put it down to my Heart Failure medication and lack of Oxygen to my brain, maybe this was the cause of my Alzheimer's? Maybe not, who knows? Or maybe I was just unlucky enough to be next in line as both my father and grandmother had died from Alzheimer's? Whatever the cause I was lucky enough (if you can call it that, some wouldn't) that I had my Angel Elaine by my side who had worked in the Care/caregivers service for the last thirty years.

And again, just like the wind, once I had been diagnosed, things had to change. My life was completely thrown into turmoil and the "Winds of Change" certainly set in. BUT!! And as you know there is always a BUT with me!!LOL. A change of wind direction is not always a bad thing. As soon as I had embraced two of the best words in the English language, which are Awareness and Acceptance, things started to change for the better. And when I say acceptance that just doesn't mean the person who has been diagnosed, but their family, friends and social circle must also accept they have this illness and realise they are still the same person!!

Since that day, as you know, we have dedicated our lives to raising awareness and reducing the Stigma that comes along with it, and I am so happy to say, for the first time, we can see a difference, so let's take a look at what's happened since that day I heard those words "You Have Alzheimer's".

I have written three books, started to volunteer at two brand new memory cafes in my home town, worked alongside Dementia Uk and Alzheimer's Society in

Thoughts by Norrm's Mcnamara

spreading awareness, taken part in many TV and radio interviews and also become Chairman of the UK's first ever Dementia leadership group (Torquay) , not forgetting to be lucky enough to be involved in the first ever opening of a memory cafe in the United States of America!!

But where's the hard evidence I ask myself?? Well, first of all there is always Dementia Awareness Day which has nearly 12,000 followers on Face book alone, and that's before we start to count all the events going on all over the UK not to mention the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Spain and beyond!! LOL When you think about it its quite frightening because its raised awareness to hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people.

But being me I still need hard evidence, so here it is. On October the 7th 2011 I have been asked to LAUNCH brand new "Help With Dementia " cars which the whole of the NHS are taking on board and will be distributing all over the country. Elaine and I have been working alongside others to produce these and it's so good to see an end result!! Now that's what I call CHANGE!!

Elaine and I also advised one of the main hospitals in Devon the Royal Devon and Exeter have adopted a new admission brochure which charts the life and details of anyone who has dementia as to help the nurses understand more about the person with Dementia. And on top of that they have now specially trained nurses who are trained specifically in dealing with people with dementia who also have challenging behaviour because of their frustration at their illness. They are trained to spot the warning signs and how to interact with them so the frustration doesn't erupt. I have been asked to do a TV appearance to state the benefits of this for the future.

SO!!! The next time you hear people saying that things will NEVER CHANGE! Or it's just the same as it always was, you can now tell them different cant you!!

THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE HAPPENING!!

They are happening here and now, in our lifetime, and right in front of your very own eyes.

So please join me in this fight we are in, this war we are fighting, but it's one we are just starting to make in-roads in, nobody ever said life was easy.

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