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FORGET ME NOT: FOUR CORNERS

Airs Monday 10TH July 2017

Forget Me Not: Australians living with dementia

"I've told people that I love dearly that unless they want a good slap, don't ever refer to me as a dementia sufferer." Suzie

On Monday night, *Four Corners* brings you a story of identity, love and dignity.

"I'm not 'suffering' with dementia I'm just another person diagnosed at a younger age and there are a lot of people out there like me." Suzie

In this touching and brave program, three families have opened their lives to *Four Corners* to tell their stories.

"What keeps me going, I think, is just love. He's my best friend. And I made a commitment to cherish him and care for him. I really want to see that through." Mandy

Dementia is the second biggest cause of death in Australia. More than four-hundred thousand Australians have already been diagnosed with the disease and the figures are rising. A diagnosis is devastating. But for these families, it is being faced clear-eyed, with a determination to enjoy life to the full.

"My diagnosis has helped me come to grips with some of the things that I've always put off for tomorrow." Brian

We follow their intensely personal stories as they share their hopes, fears and plans for the future.

"I have a bucket list. I want to travel more, I want to spend more time with my children, I want to embrace life and I don't want to forget the people that I love." Susie

"I want to spend more time with my grandchildren, I want to travel around Australia, and I want to tell my wife that I love her." Brian

For a disease that will touch so many Australians, there is often little understanding of the condition. There are more than one hundred types of dementia, inheriting the disease is relatively rare, and in some cases, it can begin to take effect when a person is in the prime of their life.

"I was madly in love with him, and there was no way that I was going to change my mind." Mandy, wife

In interviews with leading doctors in the field, the program explores the research into the steps that can be taken that may help stave off or slow the progression of the disease.

"There aren't a lot medications available, but you can do lots of things in your lifestyle." Doctor

Shining through this inspiring program is the love and dedication of the families and friends determined to cherish every minute they have with left.

"I just remind him that the diagnosis was our diagnosis, that it's not just him. It's something in our life that we need to deal with. I remind him constantly that he is Brian Fischer who happens to have Alzheimer's, he is not Brian Alzheimer's. Because Alzheimer's could take over your whole life if you let it." Heather, wife

"There is no struggle for me to come in here and help. It's all done with love and that's what it's about." Rodger, best friend

Forget Me Not, reported by Janine Cohen and presented by Sarah Ferguson, goes to air on Monday 10th July at 8.30pm EDT. It is replayed on Tuesday 11th July at 10.00am and Wednesday 12th at 11pm. It can also be seen on ABC NEWS channel on Saturday at 8.00pm AEST, [ABC iview](#) and at [abc.net.au/4corners](#).

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