

Living with Alzheimer's: Make the Most of Every Day

"People ask me, you know, does mom know who I am? As if, if the answer, is 'No,' that they're gonna be, you know, 'Oh, I'm so sorry.' And I don't feel that way at all. I feel at this point, as long as she knows that she's loved and cared for which I'm sure she does because I'm always hugging on her and kissing on her; and she, she, embraces that – so I know it means something to her."

"I moved in three years ago, primarily because I realized that she was getting up at night and sometimes calling out loud. I wanted to make sure that if she got up to go to the bathroom, which she would do all the time, that she didn't fall - she didn't come disoriented and fall. So that was the reason I started coming at night."

"I've got two wonderful daytime Home Aids, but I couldn't afford someone at night. So I became the night person. And for me, there's a sense of relief to know that if anything happens, no matter what it is, if, if yelling and she just needs to be comforted or reassured that she's okay, she's fine. I can do that, you know, without any issue."

"Turn, turn, turn."

"Having constant support, when you think you're in this alone – so many people think that, that they're in this alone – is such a big deal, big deal."

"The big thing is to utilize the resources that are available. This disease is not new. There are some answers out there, to how to manage, um, this and, and, and, and so I would say reach out for people who have done this or have helped people who have done this to see what is available to you."

"You're welcome. I've got a couple more to do and then we will be finished, alright."

"You look pretty. Now you just need your lipstick and your blush and you will be ready to go."

"My mom would definitely be referred to as a mover and shaker. Mom started out as a telephone operator at the district attorney's office here in Queens. And she moved her way up to become the Director of Victim Crime Services."

"She was a trustee of her church out here in Queens. And she was the person that a minister would come to because they knew she had connections."

"She's known for being a bit of a matchmaker for folks in the church. And she's the person who knows who can get the job done, if she can't get it done herself. That's who she was in her prime."

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"I am a professional photographer. I have been for the last 20 years or, or so. I started out taking pictures of family. But people, capturing the essence of people is 'my thing'."

"Mom and I had a session. I believe it was in 2017, I was inspired by that ad campaign, What Becomes A Legend Most, where they had a lot of the stars. And we had mink coat black belt with gloves, jewelry, and we did some shots of her. And it was really a great session. I'm so glad I did it when I did cuz soon after that she would not have been able to do it. And, um, something that, you know, I will always have in my mind, in my memory, and photos of."

"I'm so involved with the day to day that I don't often have time to stop and think about, the difference between, um, mom, then ... and mom now. And when I do, I think that's the thing that takes me down the most, um, because of her vibrancy, um, and what she did for, um, our family and myself and my brother. I gotta find, um, comfort in what I'm able to do for her now. Cuz all she has is right now, and so that's what I dedicate my energy towards - right now."

"One of the things that I say to caregivers who may feel that their lives are being put upon because of the challenges that are faced with with the person that they're caring for is to try to embrace whatever moments you're going through. And, and turn it into something positive. Because you don't know, we don't know how much longer we're gonna have with, with these people who have cared and loved us for our lives."

"People oftentimes tell me, 'Oh, you're such a good son. You're such a great son for doing this and that.' And I'm like, this is what sons are supposed to do. This is what kids are supposed to do, they're supposed to take care of, until they can't anymore. So, as long as I can breathe, you know, then, and I can manage it."