

[Background music]

(Alex) - My name is Alex Preston, I am 57 years old and I live with Alzheimer's disease. How I became aware of my illness was that I, I had people at work complaining about me.

(Teresa) – I was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's when I was 59. Dementia Friends brings awareness about dementia and shows some of the challenges that might face someone with dementia. I just thought dementia was a really old person's disease. Dementia doesn't just affect your memory. I get hallucinations. It affects your smell, because I keep smelling burning, I thought all the wires in the house were burning. My son came and checked all and he said Mum there's nothing burning.

[outside birds chirping]

(Alex) – Everybody knows about the memory problems, but there is far more to that than just memory problems. It's the moments of panic that you can feel. I mean I never used to feel like that, but I can suddenly feel very vulnerable and I don't know why. And it's that understanding of it and people being able to notice the little signs, and it is little signs. I now struggle counting money because when I look at numbers I mix numbers up, so numbers it's affected me. It's making people realise you know you don't have to be old to develop it. Dementia is actually a disease of the brain, so it is a disease the same as cancer or any other thing it's a disease.

(Nelly) – My mum saw her doctor in 2013 and the diagnoses was mixed Alzheimer's and vascular dementia.

(Emma) – And now my daughter has been helping me. I don't know how to thank her she has done a lot, she has done a lot. It's not easy I know, but she has got patience.

(Nelly)- it is so important that people become Dementia Friends.

(Emma) – Even in singing club you see the one who plays the guitar she calls me Emma come and sing, Emma do this and Emma you're so happy. [both laugh]

(Teresa) – You're still the same person that you were the day before you were diagnosed. You're still you; you can still have a life.

(Alex) – I always wanted to write an album, a music album. And I did have some people say to me you can't write an album, what's the point in writing that album. And that's the moment that I decided well I'm going to show you I can write that album. We recorded a twelve track CD, which is now released. So I'm really proud that I managed to do that.

(Teresa) - Me and my daughter Ellie have recently joined a gym. And we've started doing Tai Chi, going on the treadmill.

(Alex) – The reason it's so important for you to become a Dementia friend is because one you can get awareness. That bit of information can help me in so many ways and other people like me.

(Teresa) - I look after my grandchildren. Emily is 9 and she's a real good Dementia Friend. [giggles]. There's a pub not far from where I live in Ludlow and they've just had all new flooring. The black to me looks like a hole. Emily went "Nanny don't look at the floor" and she

stood on the black tile and jumped up and down and she said “see it’s not a hole nanny”
[giggles] “it’s solid” [Laughs]

(Alex) – Be patient with me and guide me to do what I’m trying to do. Smile at us, you know as some times people don’t do that. They find out and they go dead straight faced. When I tend to see somebody at smiling at me, do you know what I mean just be normal, that’s all it is. If you know I’ve got it just treat me like me, that’s all I ask you to do. I’m still Alex I’m still the same guy I was before.

(Nelly) – A smile, saying hello

(Emma) – keeps me going you know, keeps me strong, it makes me happy.

[Music outro]