

Good Afternoon Everyone

Fifty years ago the late MARTIN LUTHER KING

SAID “ I HAVE A DREAM “

I too have a dream. I dream that the whole of the world could be Dementia Friendly.

But I have decided to start with my local Community.

My name is Brian Malone and I am 64 years old. I live with my wife Sharon in Dundee which I am sure you all know is in Scotland. We have a 23 year old daughter Jennifer and a six year old grandson Ellis. Together they light up my life and I love them very much.

Four years ago, just a matter of days after my sixtieth birthday I was given a diagnosis of Lewy Body Dementia and Vascular Dementia. Although I had been undergoing various assessments and two brain scans I was shocked to hear this life changing news.

I was unable to accept, believe or even begin to understand what I had been told.

For the next twelve months I found myself in a very dark and frightening place. My wife and daughter often refer to this period as, “ The Lost Year “

About this time I was referred to the Dundee Resource Centre of Alzheimer Scotland. Just meeting with other people with Dementia and seeing how they coped with their diagnosis was enough for me to accept that I had to stand up and fight this disease which was consuming me.

The Management and staff at Alzheimer Scotland must take all the credit for guiding me through the next few months with a caring friendly approach. Never too busy to listen to me telling a story. Probably, for the tenth time that day.

My daily life improved and my knowledge and understanding of my illness increased.

I was encouraged and assisted to become confident and to always ask for assistance when I required it.

I had a few nocturnal episodes resulting in me leaving the house in night attire and sometimes without footwear. I was found by the Local Police patrols and also by the Community Response Service. Thankfully, nothing untoward befell me on these occasions.

The outcome was, for my house doors to be fitted with exit alarms which would alert the alarm service that I had actually left the house.

Around this time my wife Sharon and I decided that we would make all our neighbours aware of my Dementia. They received this so readily that there were now sixty friendly pairs of eyes watching out for me.

We decided at this time that we would also visit all the local shops and traders and taxi businesses.

Very briefly I will now go through everyone who is a member of my Dementia Friendly Community.

My newsagent is a lovely Indian gentleman. Some days when I am not so well I go to collect my daily newspapers. At these times he will ensure that I pick my usual newspapers and always helps me to give him the correct money.

The Hairdresser knows exactly what I usually have done to my hair. Sometimes I discover I have no money with me when I try to pay her. This is never a problem as she knows my wife will come by later and pay for my haircut.

The Post Office staff are very friendly. They have a method which they use when I am not so sure what I need. Through a process of elimination we are usually able to work out what I actually wish to purchase.

My Local Pharmacy staff know me well. All my medication needs are logged on their computer so a simple check usually helps to decide what I need. They always phone my wife to let her know that I have been there.

Even our local butcher knows exactly how I like my steak cut.

As well as all these wonderful people I am well known to our Local Police, Community Wardens, Community Alarm Response Staff, and our postman. When I am out I am greeted by people and asked if I need any assistance (in the nicest possible way).

Our local football club are very good to us. They have provided us with season tickets in a part of the stadium which is disabled friendly and they take good care of us on match days.

I would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You

To Alzheimer Europe for giving me the time to speak at this Conference. It has been an honour and I feel privileged to be here. And to the organisers of this conference. Thank You All.

To Alzheimer Scotland for turning my life around. I am eternally grateful

To The Scottish Dementia Working Group for selecting me to represent them at this conference and all the fantastic work they do in Scotland.

To my friends from Scotland who are supporting me here today.

To Deborah Grossman for her care and support.

And to you ladies and gentlemen for your patience during this presentation

