

2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on

# DEMENTIA AND DEMENTIA CARE

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## If I can do this living with dementia, anybody can: Norrms McNamara

**Norrms McNamara**

The Purple Angel Dementia Awareness Campaign, UK

I was diagnosed aged just 50 with dementia, I had no idea but my wife Elaine (Angel) as I call her, was a professional carer/caregiver for 30 years + and she knew the signs so took me straight to the Doctors. When I was diagnosed I was devastated, I have said so many times since that I had already lost my own grandmother and father to this awful illness so I have already read the book, seen the last page, and read the last line, unless they find a cure, I KNOW what's about to happen, how it ends and because of that, went on a downward spiral for months after. The more I looked around the more I realised there was very little out there for those with dementia and especially at the age of 50. I realised we had to do something that had never been done before which was to approach as many people as possible, with information and educate them a little in dementia.

Nothing too complicated, just the basics to wet their appetite and get them to look up for more info on it. As I write this today I can confirm that the Purple Angel campaign is now known as the Global Purple Angel campaign, we are recognised in over 55 Countries worldwide, we have nearly 1,000 Global purple Angel Ambassadors all over the world, and always looking for more. We were the first ever to open a memory cafe in the United States, Africa and Turkey. Who cares if I can't remember what happened yesterday? As long as today is okay that's fine with me!!! Maybe keeping myself so busy has kept me as well as I am today. I think as an organisation we have helped others together and as one "TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG" The purple Angels Motto is "INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT FOR ALL".

### Biography

Norrms McNamara is a global advocate for dementia, and as a man from the UK also living with a diagnosis of Lewy Body dementia, he has been very active in working to help reduce stigma of dementia. His accomplishments include organizing the first ever Dementia Awareness Day (now an annual event), founding the Torbay Dementia Action Alliance, speaking to police and other first responders about their role in the dementia crisis, and authoring four books. He is also a frequent speaker and blogger on the topic and the inspiration behind the Purple Angel, which is quickly becoming the international symbol for dementia awareness.

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