

Newmarket's Jane Kennedy is changing the stigma of an Alzheimer's diagnosis, one story at a time

January is Alzheimer's Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about the disease and the people who are living with it

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AURORA, ON (Jan. 10, 2019) – Jane Kennedy is on a mission – to tell her story and the story of her mom, Eileen Howatt, to as many people as she can.

“I talk about my mom’s illness to whomever will listen. I have been telling my story so others can feel that they are not alone,” says the Newmarket resident, who is the primary caregiver of her mom. “Telling my story also helps me make sense of it all. It helps me understand where my mom is with the disease.”

In 2016, Eileen was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, which affects all aspects of the person’s life including how they think, feel and act. Eileen, who once loved to host dinner parties, now has difficulty carrying on conversations as she can’t find the words and gets angry and frustrated at herself and at Jane. Jane says the disease brings out a side of her mom she has never seen before.

Alzheimer’s disease destroys brain cells, causing thinking ability and memory to deteriorate. While the disease will ultimately kill the person living with it, each person’s journey throughout the illness is different – just like stories of lives lived before the diagnosis.

January is Alzheimer’s Awareness Month with the goal of raising awareness about the disease that impacts more than 15,000 York Region residents and their families can end the stigma associated with a diagnosis by sharing one story at a time.

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About the Alzheimer Society York Region (AS York)

The Alzheimer Society of York Region is a leader in actively supporting individuals and families living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Our quality, dementia-specific DAY program services, enriched social work program and education opportunities is well respected.

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More information: <http://alzheimer.ca/en/york/About-dementia/Alzheimer-s-disease>

You can read more about Jane’s story here: bit.ly/JaneKennedyYork

Canadian Charter of Rights for People With Dementia: <http://alzheimer.ca/en/york/Get-involved/The-Charter>