



... my grandma developed Alzheimer's disease. It has been hard to watch with my family as my Grandma has passed through the many stages of the disease, losing her memories progressively and also the ability to communicate through speech and to participate in daily activities.

Through this experience I have seen the way family members and friends have coped with grief. In my family there were a lot of unspoken words and feelings shared by all as everyone tried to cope in their own way.

I have always loved drawing and painting and all different sorts of arts and crafts as my grandma did. In my artwork I explore the identities of different individuals and how things such as memory affect our identity, exploring particularly who an individual is without the capacity to remember.

I hoped that somehow I could link all these ideas together by looking principally at people who have Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's is a sad disease, I hope that through my artwork I represent the person my grandma was and the great life she led... so there is something she can be remembered by.

It is a very difficult subject and I have discovered that Alzheimer's disease affects thousands of people all over the world - with over 1,300 new cases of Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia in Australia each week. Like our family, there are so many people going through the same experience.

Alzheimer's is a hidden disease which not many people talk about as there is no cure. I hope that through my art I can raise awareness about the disease and help to show the feelings and emotions experienced by all involved.

I would like to share an extract of a poem I wrote...

*'I will always remember my Grandma, those memories I hold so dear. I will always love my Grandma, those thoughts will never disappear.'*

Sophie  
Age 17

