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When My Grammy Forgets, I Remember: A Child's Perspective On Dementia



Synopsis

When My Grammy Forgets, I Remember: A Child's Perspective on Dementia is a resource for how to explain dementia and/or Alzheimer's in an age appropriate way. It provides conversational openings and stimulates discussion between parents and children about compassion and this debilitating disease. Alzheimer's and other dementia conditions not only affect the person suffering from the disease, but the entire family, especially the children. This story explores the difficult reality of dementia and the bittersweet changing relationship between a granddaughter and her grandmother. By including children in the family discussion, parents help them become resilient and empower them to provide comfort for the grandparents or loved ones with Alzheimer's.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, Toby Haberkorn was a voracious reader and wrote short stories. Later, as a young mother, she delighted in creating stories for her children. When My Grammy Forgets, I Remember: A Child's Perspective on Dementia was inspired by Toby's own family's experiences with her mother's dementia. Her hope is that this book will raise awareness and help families and children better understand this debilitating disease. Toby currently lives in Texas, with her family, where she is working on her next book.

There are a dearth of books that explain dementia to a young child. Ms. Haberkorn has done just that with her book. When a child encounters dementia in a beloved grandparent, her first question is "Does she still love me?" The author answers this question in her book with a resounding "Yes!" The tale begins with examples of grandma doing things for the child, She prepares her lunch, helps her create a lemonade stand and make the lemonade. She reads to her and engages in intellectual pursuits like games of bridge and foreign travel. At the end of each passage is the refrain "My grammy hugs me tight." Gradually the little girl notices her grandmother forgetting important things and acting strangely. She puts her keys in the refrigerator. She stops playing bridge, and she no longer can take her medicine by herself. Roles begin to reverse and the little girl begins to care for her grandmother. She reads to her and becomes her companion in TV watching and taking walks. Now the refrain is "I hug my grammy tight." The little girl asks her mother what is wrong with her grandmother. Her mother explains that she suffers from a brain disease, but she assures her that her grammy will always love her. The refrain here is that her mother hugs her tight. Now understanding on a childlike level what is wrong with Grammy the little girl and Grammy hug each other tight. The author brings the book together with the symmetry of the refrain throughout. Further questions which occur to a young child when faced with the prospect of dementia in a beloved grandparent are the following: Will I get this disease too? Will my parents get this disease? All these questions are in the "What will happen to me vein." We hope our children are more altruistic than that, but until they are older they simply are not. Future books should deal with these issues as well. I wonder if this author will address them in a book addressed to a child of 10. Still this is a good beginning and I encourage any family trying to broach the subject with a very young child to buy Ms. Haberkorn's book.

I so enjoyed the way this book progresses -- mirroring the progression of dementia. Grammy starts off vibrant and clear; as the book continues, we see her succumbing to dementia. It's a beautiful way to show children that the Grammy at the beginning of the book is still the Grammy at the end of the book. Children can learn that the aging person in their life is still there, still the person they have always loved. I liked the message of "everyone hugging each other tight" as families get through the challenging conditions of Alzheimer's, dementia, etc. Toby Haberkorn does a great job turning this into a positive and encouraging lesson. I would highly recommend this book for anyone who needs to explain to a child what happens when a loved one suffers memory loss. I think it will help children be less afraid and confused.

When My Grammy Forgets, I Remember is a tender children's book about how one little girl copes with her grandmother's gradually increasing dementia. Beautiful illustrations demonstrate the passage of time as the narrator watches her Grammy's slow demise into confusion. The little girl is encouraged by her mother to remain loving and supportive, finding new ways to continue their close relationship. Full of warmth and love, this story will surely be treasured by children coming to terms with the fact that adults can undergo scary changes.

Toby Haberkorn's 'When My Grammy Forgets', is a wonderfully written story which deals sensitively with an affliction that has become all too common in today's world. Written from a child's perspective, it shows the gradual progression of the grandma's disease and how the roles are gradually reversed, as the child at the end, looks after her Grammy and "hugs her tight". The illustrations nicely reflect Grammy's changing mental state, from a smiling, confident, gregarious woman to one looking lost and bewildered. The granddaughter's and daughter's love and understanding go a long way towards mitigating some of the fear associated with this affliction. A must read for any family dealing with issues of dementia.

This book really hits home, because my father in-law died from Alzheimers. We have grandchildren that need to understand what has been going on, and we don't want them to be left out in the cold. Also, it's presented delicately, but honestly, and has been a wonderful help that benefits everyone in the family. I recommend this book to every family that has children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, that is faced with this difficult challenge. Greg Z. Houston Texas

this is a must have for all families facing the growing dementia crisis in family members. language level will meet the understanding levels from toddler on up. best part of the book is how author has given the reader to tailor each "hug" situation to reflect an actual situation. this book demonstrates tremendous insight by the author - kuddos to the author

I found this book extremely useful in helping my grandchildren to understand and relate to loved ones with dementia and other types of disabilities. This author understands the trepidations of the child and teaches the child how to continue a loving and caring relationship. The full page color illustrations are bright and beautiful! I highly recommend this to parents, grandparents, libraries and elementary schools. Charlotte G.

Being of Grammy's age and a grandparent myself, I found the book gentle, caring, and wise in its simplicity. A good way to help a young child understand an otherwise complex, confusing and sad phase of a grandparent's life. I plan to share the book with others.

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