

How my friend Dementia affects me

I met my friend dementia about 3 years ago. First, his name was Alzheimer's, then it changed to mild cognitive impairment (MCI). After, he gave me a present of a mental health breakdown and I spent five and a half weeks in a mental health facility. I call it my friend because it's a way of coping with it. My memory is going and sometimes I have thinking problems. I can look after myself as my symptoms are not as bad as Alzheimer's, but people with MCI risk developing Alzheimer's.

With me, it's all to do with spatial awareness, i.e. trying to put a square peg in a round hole. My wife says that I am getting more crabby, more worried about the small things that go wrong. I do know that I am getting more tetchy at some people, especially when in super markets and more so with self-service check out or people taking too long at a cashier check out. Using public transport is becoming more difficult, mostly on buses and especially if they are fiddling in their purse or pocket for change. I am fine when travelling on the railway and at stations.

Gardening is getting harder. When I look at a space to put a plant in, it turns out to be too small or too big. On the upside, I can look after myself (i.e. shaving and getting dressed). My one worry is that the MCI will develop into Alzheimer's as I do have some scarring on the front of my brain. My friend MCI or Alzheimer's will be with me for the rest of my life and I must learn to live with them.