



# Do the kindest thing



**Marguerite Keating was just 55 years of age when she received her diagnosis of early-onset Alzheimer's:**

**“My mind immediately raced to the worst possible outcomes. I was thinking I'd lose everything. My memory. Dignity. Personality. Temperament. My physical health would fail. My relationship with my three beautiful daughters would be changed forever. I thought I can't put them through this. Right then, I wanted to end my life.”**

Today Marguerite has come full circle. Her winning smile speaks volumes. She is full of life, articulate, wise and entertaining.

Marguerite has lived a dramatic life – a story of wonderful highs and terrible losses. She was raised in Australia and was a child star of the Irish Dancing circuit winning the South Australia Championship. She once sang on stage with David Cassidy.

She is the beaming mother of three daughters. And while coping as a one-parent family for years, she managed to return to education and gain qualifications in social care, art, early education and art therapy. She worked for years with disabled adults.

Marguerite remembers one of the first turning points that led her to today's sense



of positivity. On the day she received her diagnosis, she remembers she couldn't stop the tears. As she reached for tissues, she picked up an Alzheimer Society leaflet the doctor had given her. She describes ringing Amy Murphy, the local Dementia Adviser:

**“Amy listened and calmly advised me that things would soon look very different. She pulled me from the brink. She called to my home the very next day. Amy reminded me that I could still build a fulfilling life with dementia. I have since availed of so many amazing services the Society offers.”**

Around 2015, people close to Marguerite first started noticing her symptoms. She was sometimes repeating herself. Getting appointments mixed up. But Marguerite just put it down to the pressures of life. But





eventually she got checked – and it was confirmed.

**“So it’s been a process to accept it. And that’s key. You can’t move on until you acknowledge it and start being positive. And when someone with dementia gets confused, for those close to them the key is simple: always do the kind thing. Just be kind.”**

Over the years Marguerite turned her attention to helping people and families who are living with dementia. She now sits on the European Working Group of People with Dementia. She is involved in three different Alzheimer Cafes in her local county. She campaigns for supports for everyone with dementia, she has a special zeal for addressing the particular challenges faced by younger people with the illness.

**“People have lost employment. We have no entitlements. We can’t get a blue disability card for our cars. We have to pay the GP charges. We can’t get health or life insurance.”**

Marguerite knows first-hand the power of people getting together, sharing and helping. That’s why she’s so enthusiastic about **ALZHEIMER’S TEA DAY** on **May 4th**.

**“When people gather and help each other, that’s when positive change happens. And is there a more enjoyable way than Tea Day to support such important work? I’ve witnessed how Tea Day funds have helped so many. Just think about how important these services are like the National Helpline, Dementia Advisers, home care and so much more. So please host your own Tea Day – or attend one.”**

*The most powerful  
cup of tea you’ll  
ever make.*

**May 4<sup>th</sup>  
2023**

**Alzheimer’s**

