

An illustration of a grandfather with white hair, a beard, and glasses, wearing a brown cardigan, sitting in a chair and reading a book. A young girl with brown hair, wearing a white dress with a yellow collar, sits on his lap, looking up at him. The background shows a window with yellow curtains and several potted plants on a shelf. The title 'The Books on Grandpa's Shelf' is written in a white, cursive font across the middle of the illustration.

The Books on Grandpa's Shelf

A story to help children understand dementia.

CREATED WITH THE HARTWOOD HOUSE
DEMENTIA COACHES AND CHARLOTTE DEAN.



CINNAMON
CARE COLLECTION



Louis Alexander

ADVENTURER & WORLD RECORD HOLDER

World Record Holder and Cinnamon Care Collection Ambassador, Louis Alexander. At just 26 years old, Louis is the first and only person in history to complete marathons on all Seven Continents and swim marathons in all Seven Seas.

Louis' next challenge is his most ambitious yet as he is now preparing for the final chapter of his "Trilogy of the Seven" a world-first attempt to kayak seven of the world's most challenging ocean crossings.

Foreword

There is something incredibly special about the relationship between a grandparent and their grandchild.

For me, my Grandad has always been a huge part of my life. He was one of my first heroes, and as a young boy I grew up on his incredible stories about his life and travels around the world.

After retiring from the Army, my Grandad's greatest dream was to fly to Tanzania and climb Mount Kilimanjaro. Sadly, it was a dream he never got to fulfil, following his early diagnosis of dementia in his 50s. So, shortly after finishing school, I decided to go out there and climb for him. To embrace his dream and make it my plan.

It became my first big adventure, and I remember taking the first step up the mountain knowing I was going up there for him. But when I came back down from the summit, I realised he had given me something too. I had gone up there to fulfil his dream, but I returned with a new purpose of my own.

Because he had given me the gift of adventure.

That first adventure changed the course of my life. At 26, I'm now a professional adventurer and a three-time Guinness World Records holder. But perhaps more importantly, my Grandad's legacy is the reason dementia is so close to my heart.

Dementia can change memories, conversations and the way someone behaves. As a result changing the lives of those around them too. But I learned even when dementia changes a person's world, it does not erase the love between people.

That is an important message for children to understand.

Dementia can be confusing, especially when it affects someone you love. But it should never be something children are frightened to talk about or ask questions about. Understanding it helps us support the people we love.

As a dementia advocate, I've been fortunate to meet so many people whose lives have been affected by this disease. It is why I'm committed to raising £1 million for dementia research and achieving 10 world records by the age of 30, helping to build a future where dementia is better understood, better treated and, ultimately, prevented.

I hope this book helps children and families talk about dementia with honesty, kindness and hope, and reminds every grandchild that, even when things change, the love between them and their grandparent can never be taken away.



Every Saturday, Lily visited Grandpa.

They baked biscuits, worked in the garden,
and told stories together.

Grandpa knew hundreds of stories.

Some were funny. Some were exciting.

And some he had told so many times
that Lily could almost tell them herself.



One Saturday, Grandpa seemed different.

"What's your teacher's name again?" he asked.

"Mrs. Taylor," Lily replied.

A few minutes later, he asked the same question.

Then he asked it again.

Lily felt puzzled.



One evening, Lily sat beside Mum on the sofa.

"Why does Grandpa keep forgetting things?" she asked.

Mum thought carefully.

"Grandpa has something called dementia," she said.

"Dementia affects the way the brain works."



A few weeks later,
Grandpa forgot where he had left his glasses.

They searched the kitchen. They searched the
living room. They searched the garden.

The glasses were on top of his head.

Everyone laughed. Even Grandpa.

But Lily still wondered why he was forgetting things.



Lily was quiet.

"Is Grandpa poorly?"

"Yes," Mum replied gently.

"But not like a cold or a broken arm."

She wrapped an arm around Lily.

"His brain is having trouble finding some memories."



Mum picked up one of Lily's books.

"Imagine Grandpa's memories are like books on a giant shelf."

Lily nodded.

"Many of the books are still there," Mum explained.

"But sometimes the labels get mixed up."



"Sometimes Grandpa reaches for a memory book and can't find it."

"Sometimes he finds the wrong one."

"And sometimes it takes him longer to find the book he's looking for."

Lily pictured thousands of books stretching all the way to the ceiling.



"So he doesn't forget me?" Lily asked quietly.

Mum smiled.

"He loves you very much."

*"Even when finding memories becomes difficult,
feelings of love can stay very strong."*

Lily felt a little better.



The next Saturday, Lily visited Grandpa again.

This time, Grandpa forgot the rules
of their favourite card game.

For a moment, Lily felt frustrated.

Then she remembered the books on the shelf.



"It's okay, Grandpa," she said.

"We can learn the rules together."

Grandpa grinned.

"That sounds like a good plan."

So they did.



Some days were easier than others.

Sometimes Grandpa remembered lots of things.

Sometimes he remembered only a few.

Sometimes he mixed up names or dates.

And sometimes he repeated the same story twice.

Or three times. Or even four.



But Lily discovered something important.
She and Grandpa could still make new memories.
They planted sunflower seeds.
They listened to music.
They looked through old photographs.
They shared biscuits and hot chocolate.



One afternoon, Grandpa couldn't remember the name of Lily's school.

He looked embarrassed.

Lily took his hand.

"That's okay," she said. "I can tell you."

Grandpa squeezed her hand and smiled.



As the months passed,
Lily learned that dementia changed some things.
But it didn't change everything.
Grandpa still loved sunny days. He still loved music.
He still loved chocolate biscuits.
And he still loved spending time with her.



One day, Lily looked at the family photo album.

There were pictures of holidays,
birthdays, picnics, and adventures.

Each photo was like a little memory book.

A book they could open together
whenever they wanted.



"Even if some books get lost," she said,

"we can still read the ones we find."

Grandpa smiled.

"And we can still write new ones."

Together, they turned another page.

The End

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DEMENTIA ACCREDITATION AND BEST PRACTICE

As part of a pilot project, all Cinnamon care homes are among the first in the UK to participate in the National Dementia Accreditation Scheme (NaDCAS).

Many homes have already begun their journey toward full accreditation. This scheme recognises providers who consistently go above and beyond to deliver outstanding, person-centred dementia care.

*"Beautifully simple and deeply reassuring,
The Books on Grandpa's Shelf helps children understand
dementia without losing sight of what matters most -
the person, the relationship and the love between people.
A thoughtful and important resource for families
starting conversations about dementia."*

SAM DONDI-SMITH CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NATIONAL
DEMENTIA CARE ACCREDITATION SCHEME (NaDCAS)



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