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## **Dementia changed my life: Let me change yours**

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In this presentation, I will discuss the challenges of being diagnosed with a younger onset dementia mid-career, aged 48 years old, and how society needs to change the focus of fundraising for charities and research for a cure, to a more balanced one that also supports people to live more positively with dementia. Since diagnosis, the challenges faced due to the stigma and discrimination, and the many misperceptions and myths of dementia abound. Consequently, many find themselves abandoned by the

health system, society, and their families and friends. The focus of this presentation will move to how society can change this, in particular how full and equal inclusion of people with dementia at conferences and other events about dementia will significantly change societal attitudes and actions. Dementia Friendly Communities have not done this; people with dementia have the greatest potential to do so, and I will tell you why.

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