

***Outside, Looking* (Working Title)**

Who can sense the first moments of a connection lost, a face forgotten, a path interrupted with the first intimations of an undergrowth that will, in time, obscure all remembrance of destinations charted, aspirations dreamt? At what stroke of what eternal clock does the death of reason begin? And once struck, how do those who increasingly find themselves outside looking in upon the ebbs and flows of life, honor the time passed, celebrate the time remaining, and grieve the time lost with those whose lives they share?

Aging baby-boomers are unlikely to relinquish themselves, or those they love, to progressively debilitating dementias without a fight. Our proposed documentary and educational tools, told primarily through the voices of individuals in the earliest stages of cognitive decline, will provide insight into the triumphs and challenges of an eventuality that is expected to affect one American every 33 seconds by mid-century.

By exploring the landscapes of minds that are sporadically, yet increasingly, chaotic, we hope to reveal the remaining essence of what it means to be human, challenging the perceptions of a youth-dominated culture obsessed with the speed and efficiency of information processing to the exclusion of accumulated wisdom and emotional intelligence. By inspiring a reevaluation of our perceptions of what it means to be human, we hope to improve the quality of life of those experiencing progressive cognitive decline — and, in doing so, our own

Mission

To help ensure that people experiencing progressive cognitive decline sustain meaningful participation in the lives of their families, friends, and communities

Targeted Audience

Outside, Looking has particular relevance for people in the earliest stages of a progressive loss of cognitive skills. However, it is primarily intended to raise the awareness of the wider community, from family and professional care partners, to clergy, public policy decision makers, and the general public.

Project Components

- A 70-90 minute documentary filmed in high definition video format
- Approximately 30, two to four minute, Web- and DVD- based, topic-directed educational modules with downloadable tip sheets in the form of printable PDF's
- A Web- and DVD-based readers theater transcript of the film
- A Web-based compilation of all interview material searchable by topic
- An interactive Web-based community for sharing concerns and support relevant to those in the earliest stages of progressive cognitive decline

Rationale

Greater public awareness of Alzheimer's related dementia has made the baby boom generation acutely aware of, and concerned about, the eventualities of cognitive decline. As the baby boom generation ages, society will be increasingly experiencing a loss of productivity, and loved ones will be experiencing a loss of personal connection and support, due to the progressive cognitive declines of people whose lives are critically contributing to the happiness and welfare of our own. The proposed project will deepen our insights into the experience of progressive cognitive decline in the hope of identifying opportunities for continuing self-actualization and fulfillment, not only for those experiencing progressive cognitive declines — but for all of us whose lives are immeasurably diminished by their losses.

For more information regarding this project, please contact Joanne Durante, executive producer:
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