

José Manuel

Faces of Caregiving - Spain



José Manuel, a retired mechanic, met his wife Carmen when they were teenagers. They married, had two children and lived a happy life for many years in Lanzarote.

“We used to enjoy long walks around the park, going to the summer cinema, buying fish cakes and having fun together.”

José started to notice that Carmen would have had episodes of memory loss. She often lost her possessions and acted strangely. She was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and José sought help from the Association of Relatives of Patients with Alzheimer’s Disease.

Before her diagnosis, Carmen was passionate about looking after her family while José worked. She was a devoted housewife who loved to cook, bake and sew. She enjoyed talking on the phone with her children and socializing with friends. Now she rarely speaks with them because she struggles to follow the conversation.

Their lives changed with Carmen’s diagnosis and their roles in the home reversed. José had to quickly learn how to do the cooking and housework.

“Even though we have professional carers helping twice a week, I still find it difficult to do everything alone. I struggle with the cooking and we often rely on ready meals. I frequently feel isolated.”

“Caring for Carmen is something I have to do. Yes, it is very hard work, which does affect my life and mental state of mind. I can no longer participate in my hobbies. I can’t leave her alone for long periods, but I try not to think about it. We live our lives the best we can despite her illness.”

Join the movement at
www.embracingcarers.com