



Erica Krieger

Former carer for her grandmother who lived with Alzheimer's Disease. Erica is a [Dementia Advocate](#) with Dementia Australia, student and chair of the [Brisbane North Dementia Alliance](#). Erica is passionate about using her lived experience to help others through her advocacy work and informing research projects.

What *Worked?* Tips and Tricks

Erica had a close relationship with her grandmother and feels lucky to have been able to care for her. While it was challenging to navigate competing roles between grandchild and carer, the experience brought them closer together. The things that Erica found useful were:

- **Arming herself with information** to bring comfort. Resources and tools, such as [CogTale](#) are a good way to be informed and can provide potential treatment options
- **Look after your own health and wellbeing**; rest when you need to rest, be in tune with your body's needs
- **Look after your own brain health**, engage your mind in different ways as much as possible; Erica enjoys word puzzles and reading
- **Take the *blessings*** with the challenges

In a few words...

Dementia is a condition that doesn't just affect your memory, it affects reasoning, judgement, mood, and behaviours. It is unpredictable with good days and bad days. It is incredibly difficult to deal with alone, however it is possible to live well with the right resources in place.

Importance of *early life intervention*

- ❖ Looking after brain health from an early age is important. It is never too early to start looking after cognitive health and your overall wellbeing
- ❖ Promote mind engagement with a targeted focus on younger people
- ❖ Better promotion of resource availability is needed to reach more young people

Research Matters!

Erica sees value in research and the valuable resource [CogTale](#) offers, wishing it was available when she was caring for her grandmother. Erica believes [CogTale](#) provides information regarding cognition-orientated treatments that the GP and geriatrician may not be fully aware of. She would like to see this resource more readily available to anyone interested in cognition-orientated research. CogTale provides information on trusted, evidence-based interventions and bridges the gap between science and practice, enabling people to:

- Easily find research and understand it without needing a science degree.
- Take a new idea, or adapt ideas, and enjoy the experience with the person you care for.