

Awarded  
"Best of the Best"  
(see inside for details)

# The Unforgettable Adventures of Grandma's Cape

## Children's Activity Book

*(Understanding the Forgetting Disease: Dementia)*



# DEDICATED TO ALL THE ADVENTURES GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN WILL ENJOY TOGETHER



ur activity book is an educational resource for children and their families to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease and the relationships loved ones can still treasure, despite the disease. These experts agree:

*"The Unforgettable Adventures of Grandma's Cape poignantly explores the emotional complexities children may face when a beloved relative is affected by dementia. By engaging young readers through a relatable story and a series of imaginative activities, author Joel Kroft teaches that people with memory loss are still capable of loving and being loved and reminds us compassion, warmth and humanity are the greatest 'super powers' we can bring to bear in caring for a loved one who may be cognitively frail." — Dr. Daniel R. George, Ph.D., M.Sc., Assistant Professor, Penn State College of Medicine*

*"I love this project! The information is accurate and easy to understand. Great work!" — Dr. Mary Ligon, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gerontology and Chair of the Behavioral Sciences Department, York College of Pennsylvania*

*"I cried when I read this! Simply wonderful." — Dianne Knettel, RN MS, Certified Validation Master, Director of Validation Training, Volunteers of America*

*"This book provides a child's eye view of Alzheimer's disease. While acknowledging the uncertainty and sorrow that accompanies the gradual loss of a dear grandparent, the story delivers an upbeat message that families can enjoy each other in the here and now. Factual 'Memory Minutes' offer concrete advice for children about why things are happening and what a child can do for a grandparent with Alzheimer's. This helpful little volume also includes an assortment of games and activities for children to complete alone or with their grandparents, and 10 Pledges to help a child remember how to relate to a grandparent with Alzheimer's in a way that preserves joy and dignity for everyone." — Mary Anne Stanley, Youth Services Manager at Manheim Township Public Library*

*"This book helped me understand what it would be like to have dementia and that's really important!" — Micah, age 6*

*"After reading this story, I realized that even if someone has dementia, she still is who she used to be and you need to love her just the same!" — Jonah, age 9*


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All illustrations by Gabrielle Hoffman  
First printing February 2016 in York, Pa.

This educational activity book is distributed for free for the benefit of children and their families.



## WHY A CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BOOK ABOUT DEMENTIA?

 Country Meadows Retirement Communities and our non-profit sister community, Ecumenical Retirement Community, have cared for many, many older adults with Alzheimer's disease and helped their families re-connect with them to enjoy many, many more years of fulfilling relationships, even with the changes the illness brings. Children in particular can be affected by these changes in their grandparent. We saw a need to help them better understand what's happening and their important role in supporting their loved one. An interactive activity book is a way to relate to children of different ages with different learning styles.

We conducted a contest among senior illustration students at the Pennsylvania College of Art & Design (PCA&D) in Lancaster, Pa., to design the activity book's cover. The design inspiration was to convey a loving relationship between a grandparent and grandchild. Twenty-three talented students participated, making the choice very difficult as each presented a different expression of that love in a unique style.

PCA&D is a professional art college offering a BFA degree, certificates, credentials and curricula that enable students of all ages to pursue art as their life's work. We are grateful for their partnership in this student competition.

Ultimately we selected illustrator Gabrielle (Gabby) Hoffman, whose choice of colors and style elicit the readers' curiosity, playfulness and quest for adventure. The cover illustration invites readers to participate and continue the rest of the story. We are indebted to Gabby's contributions in creating a complete set of illustrations. Here's a little bit about this talented illustrator:

*"I grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania. I have been interested in art since I was little. I had a lot of encouragement from family and my high school art teacher. I am an Illustration major at PCA&D and would like to create children's books." — Gabby Hoffman*



**Come on, let's start our adventure ...**



ARGENTUM 2017

**BEST OF THE BEST**

EXCELLENCE IN SENIOR LIVING

*This children's activity book was awarded Argentum's (the leading national senior living association) prestigious national "Best of the Best Award" for an innovative program.*



**Our adventure starts here.**

*M*y Grandma is pretty awesome.

She can do just about anything.

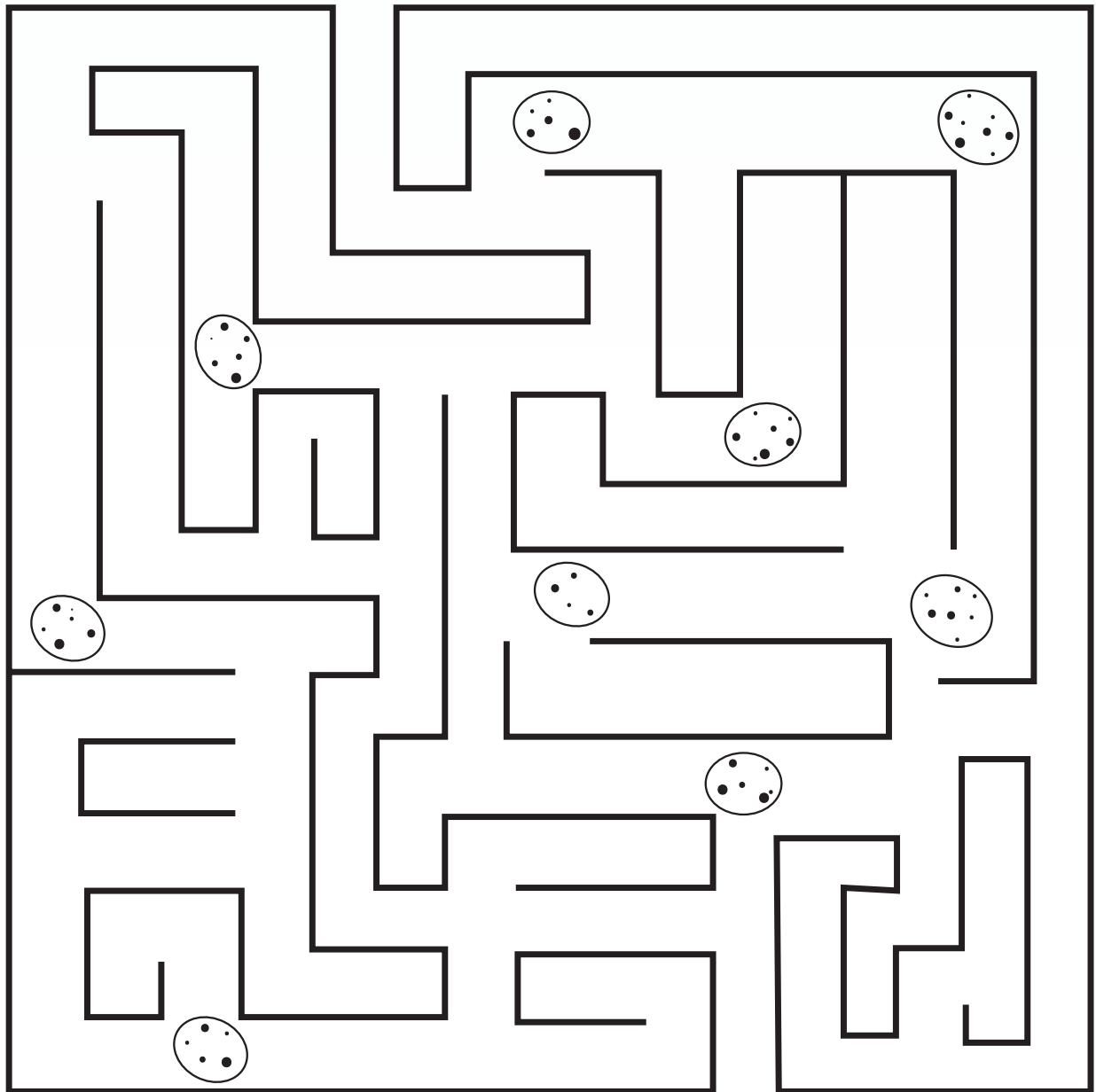
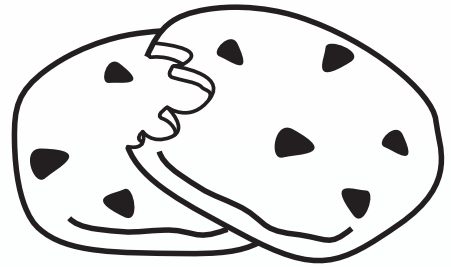
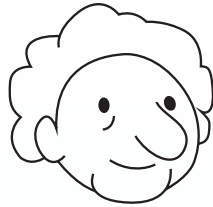
We play the best games. Grandma loves being a superhero. She makes me be the sidekick, but that's OK because she really, REALLY likes to wear the cape!

*(Plus I think her  
chocolate chip cookies  
are her superpower!)*



# COLLECT COOKIES FOR GRANDMA IN THIS COOKIE MAZE

Start at the bottom and work your way up to Grandma, collecting cookies as you go.

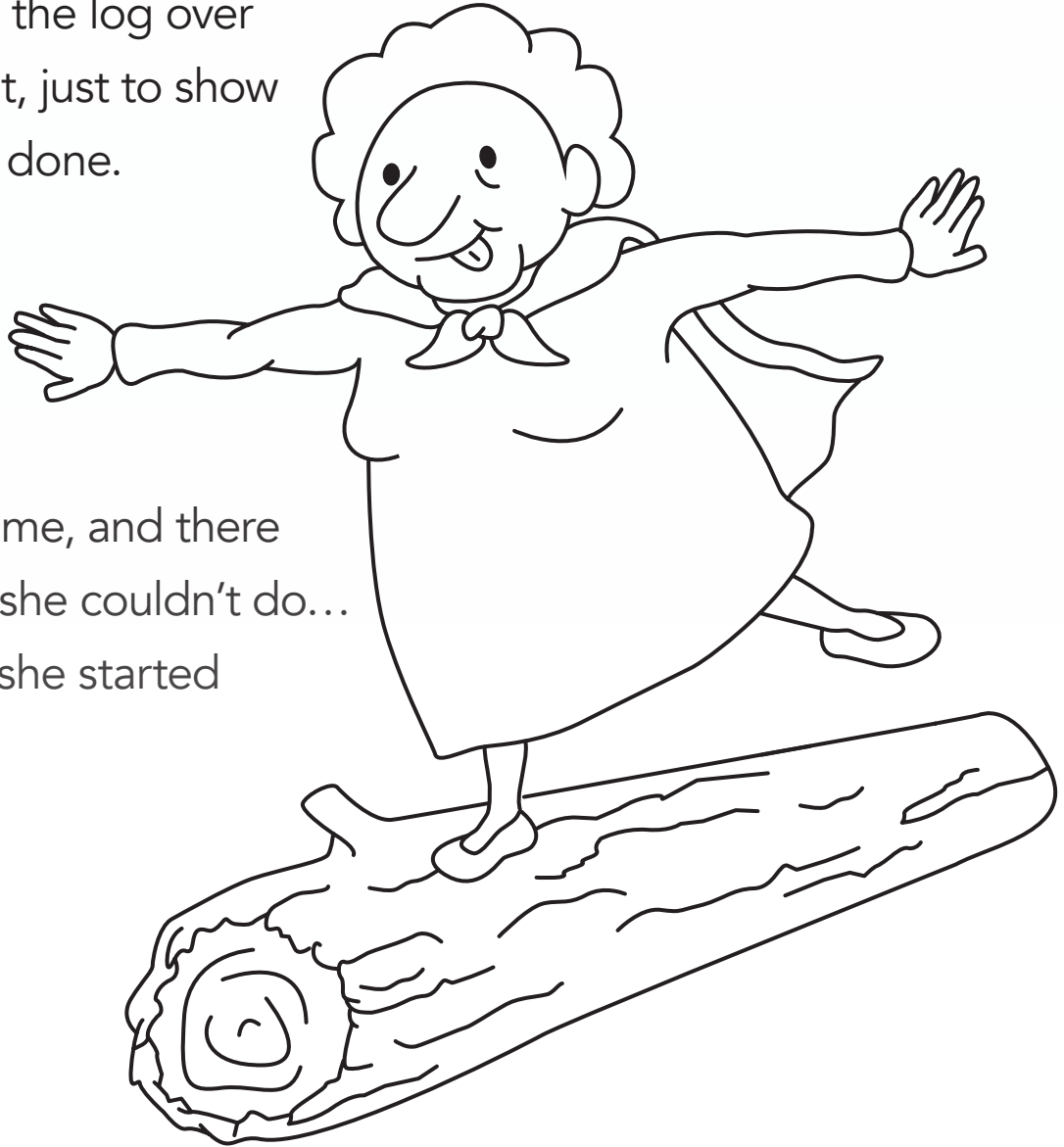


Start here





My favorite weekends are the ones I get to spend at her house, full of interesting things and those wonderful cookies. We go on adventures in the woods, and Grandma even crosses the log over the creek first, just to show me it can be done.



She is awesome, and there was nothing she couldn't do... at least until she started forgetting.

### *MEMORY* MINUTE:

Everyone forgets sometimes. We might forget our homework or where we left our shoes. This is normal and may even happen a bit more as we get older. The forgetting caused by Alzheimer's disease (a form of dementia) is different. You may forget important things like how to get back to your house or bake your favorite cookies.

CAN YOU FIND THE ITEMS IN THE PICTURE BELOW?



Grandma



Bike Wheel



Cupcake



Cane



Paintbrush



Glasses

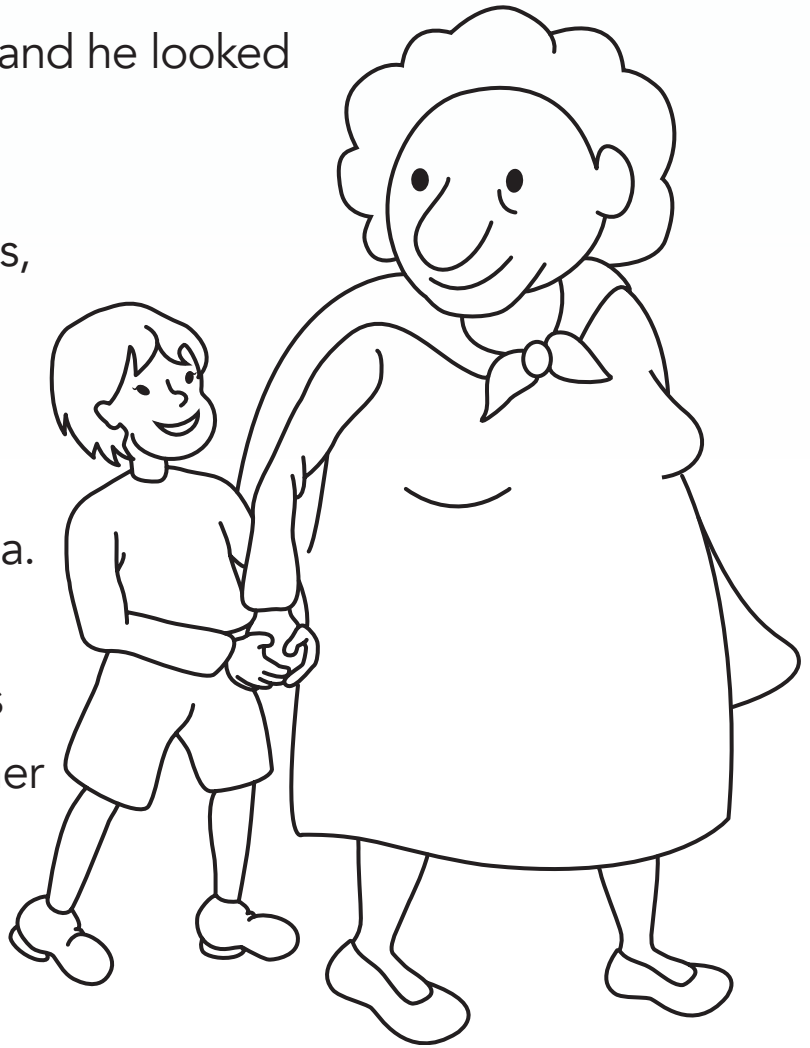


Grandma's Cape



At first it wasn't a big deal. Sometimes she forgot about her cookies in the oven or couldn't think of the right word to say. But one time, she couldn't get us back home from the shoe store, and it was very scary. Grandma always knew what to do before, but not that time. She looked scared, and sad, and mad all at the same time. I didn't know what to do. Later I told my Dad, and he looked scared and sad too.

Dad talked to some doctors, watched some videos and read a lot of stuff online to try and understand what was going on with Grandma. Then Grandma had to go see some doctors. She was pretty nervous, but I held her hand and asked her if she wanted her cape. That made her smile.



### *MEMORY* MINUTE:

Alzheimer's disease causes changes in the brain that can make people, places and things your loved one knows become unknown and even scary. We can help our loved ones through this by being supportive and calm, and avoid saying things like, "Don't you remember?" which may make them feel worse.



## COLOR GRANDMA AND HER CAPE

A  
COLOR ME  
Memory





Dad told me Grandma has an illness, but it wasn't something I could catch. Grandma has something called "Alzheimer's disease," a form of dementia (the "forgetting disease").

That sounded bad. Really bad. I asked what I could do to make her better. Dad sat down with me and explained it wasn't the kind of sickness a pill could make better, like the time I had strep throat. We talked a lot about the changes we might see in Grandma. Dad says Alzheimer's disease changes things in Grandma's brain and makes it hard for her to remember. And he told me it would get worse, but not all at once. So now we need to spend as much time as we can with Grandma—I like that part!



### MEMORY MINUTE:

People living with Alzheimer's disease may need help with everyday tasks. When you see your loved one is getting frustrated with a task like making a grocery list, you can help by supporting her and suggesting you do it together. Be sure you don't just do things for her that she can still do as this could make her feel bad.

## SPENDING TIME WITH MY GRANDPARENT

List the favorite ways you like to spend time with your grandparent:

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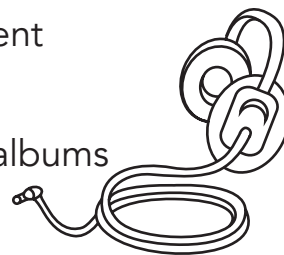
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If you ever run out of ideas, here are some good ones:

- Doing word games, word searches, crossword or jigsaw puzzles
- Painting pictures with watercolors
- Cooking and baking familiar foods
- Cutting coupons
- Tending to an herb or flower garden
- Arranging flowers
- Making crafts
- Listening to favorite music, playing an instrument
- Caring for pets
- Sharing family history, looking through photo albums
- Accompanying your loved one to restaurants, stores, church/temple



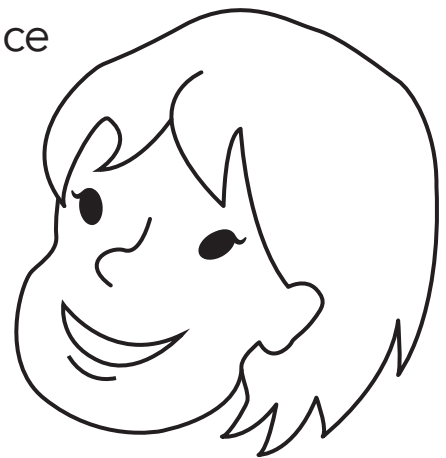


Dad also said that sometimes Grandma may get really confused, or sad, or even mad, but that's OK. When that happens, he says I have to remember it's not Grandma's fault because having trouble with your feelings is another part of Alzheimer's disease.

Grandma lived in the next town over, but we would stop by a lot just to say "hi" and see how she was doing. After a while, we noticed she was having a hard time keeping her house neat and tidy like she used to. Grandma also told me she didn't like spending so much time alone.

Dad found her a new home where she doesn't have to clean. There are lots of people Grandma's age around so Grandma won't get lonely. Now Grandma lives in a place called an "assisted living community."

That's a place for people like Grandma who need some extra help. And the best part is, it's really close to us so I can visit  
**ALL THE TIME!**



### *MEMORY MINUTE:*

Sometimes people living with Alzheimer's disease have trouble finding the right words to express how they feel. This happens more and more the longer they live with the disease. Remember we can communicate with hugs and smiles just as well as with words, and your loved one can as well. Pay attention to what her facial expressions and body language are telling you.

## “A SMILE GOES A LONG WAY” WORD SEARCH

Find the words below in the word search. Look up, down, forward and diagonally. By the way, these types of puzzles are good for your memory because they challenge you to try new things and strengthen your ability to remember.

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                M T W
            P B X Z N O I C Y
        V C H H Z O M Q H C L G I
    H Z K C A R R T Z Z V R Q Y Y J U
F B A B S S P B Q P L V X V S Q M T V
    U G C O N F U S E D F C C G L G I P P M X
    N W E K X I F C Z K S A Z D U Z L D I K C
    C F T C Y K           I I S T W           A H E C B U
    H O T G E O           H I A L I           D M N K E M
    B G R A N D P A R E N T N J J K A L N P A C I C A
    M U G K A L Z H E I M E R ' S D I S E A S E B C X
    I E E M K L B N M E B P D D M H E K H Y X H S A K
H H A T K T L K V U R Z K U V C N R F S A C E Q A J N
Q S R T F T H J X Q M C S J D Y K F L H I G N T T Z M
C N G A M Z H B O N D P E N E J C Q Q T N B G Q K B B
    V O B M      V Q Z N U R A N Q P R P E A F      U J J C
    Z S L D      H R Q U R Z A Y W M U H W      M H X R
    Y U E K V      R H G V Q M Y P K C C      W M P M B
    W R I Y N      Y C P J E
    U Z Y T D L      E C Z N C G
    M K S U P E R H E R O A M J G J C V B W R
    N L R V V T U P E F M Q O G Y J S D T J H
    V Q O N Y O L S U L V O U P M U C M P
    L P C S I W Y Z D K N Z U O R M L
    W P V X F O R G E T F U L
    S F C M S V T J O
    F R Y
  
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ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE  
CONFUSED  
FORGETFUL  
CHANGES

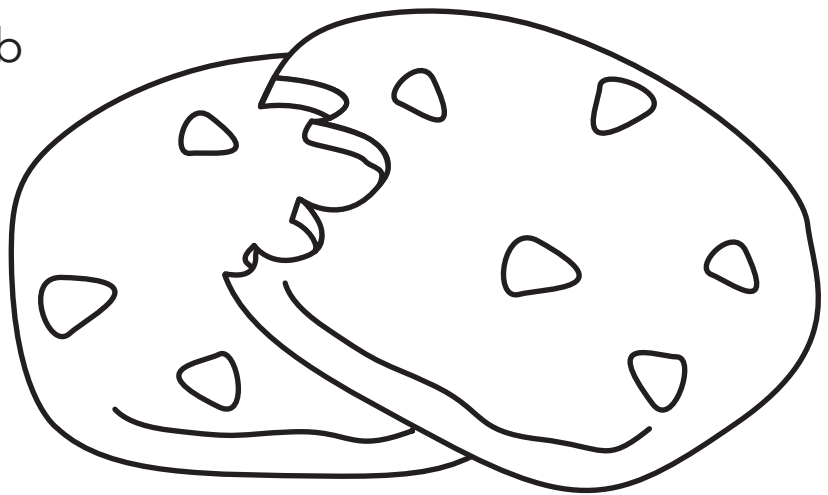
GRANDPARENT  
GRANDCHILD  
UNFORGETTABLE  
BOND

SUPERHERO  
SIDEKICK  
CAPE  
LOVE



At first Grandma was nervous about her new home and sad to leave her old one which held so many special memories. I was really sad too because her house was just about my favorite place in the whole world. But we helped her set up her new apartment, and I told her we could have lots of new adventures now. She has made many new friends who fill her days with fun conversations and interesting things to do.

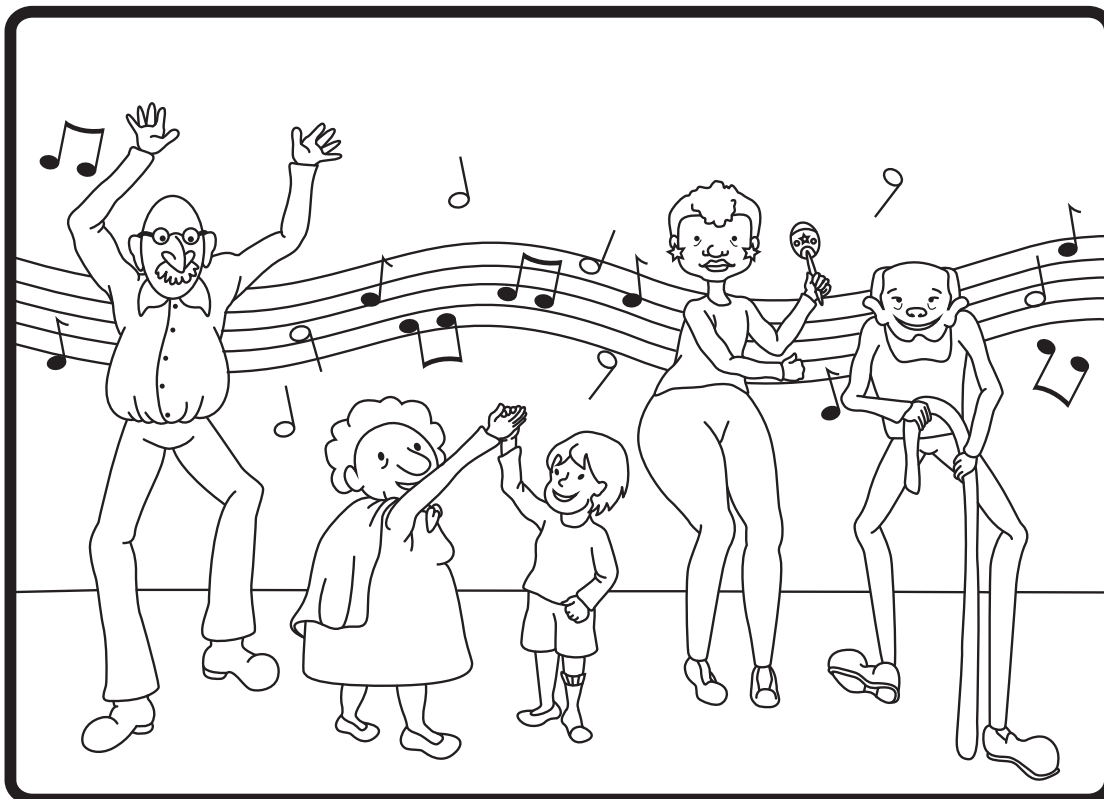
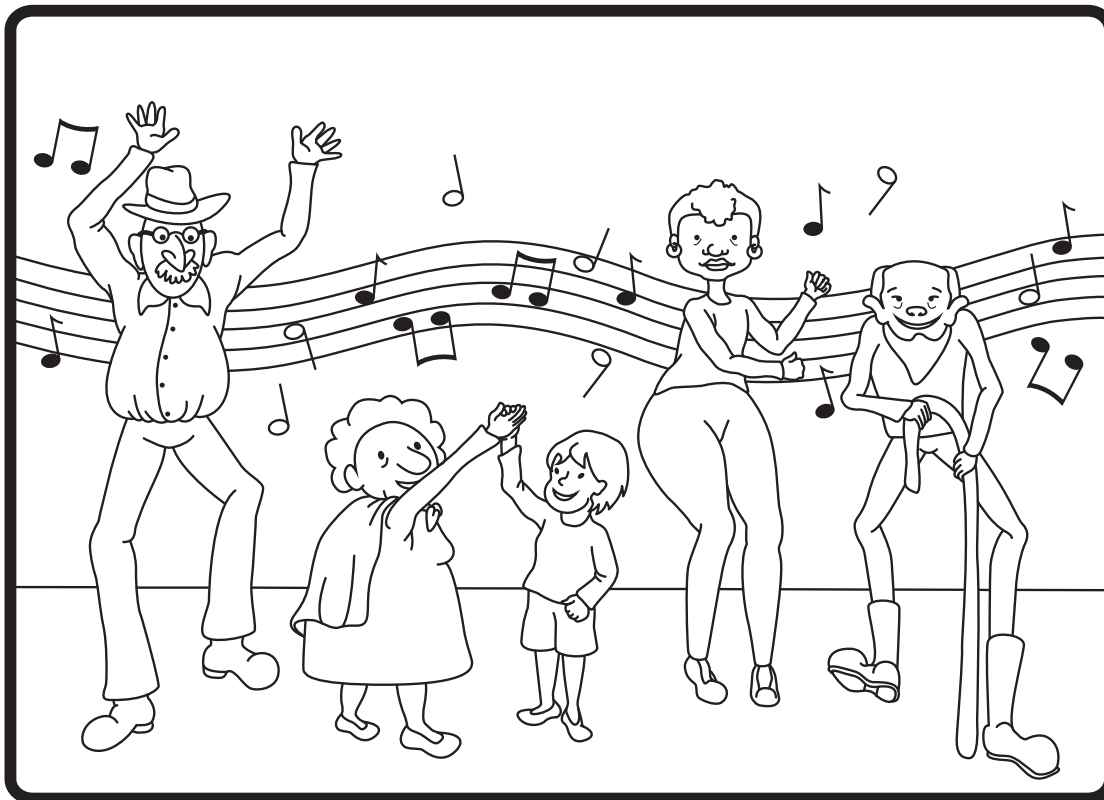
We can still play superheroes. I also get to help Grandma take care of the community's cats. Grandma and I are teaching the people who work in her new home how to make the world's best chocolate chip cookies. I even found out that some of Grandma's new friends don't have a "me" to visit them, so I've kinda got a new job helping them go on adventures and have fun too!



### MEMORY MINUTE:

Sometimes when people live with Alzheimer's disease, they don't get to see other people as often as they used to. This can make them very sad and lonely. Being around other people like family and friends is really important to help them stay happy and feel comfortable.

CAN YOU SPOT THE 7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN  
THE TWO PICTURES BELOW?



**Answers:** 1. Tall man's hat, 2. grandchild's sock, 3. tall woman's earrings, 4. tall woman playing a maraca, 5. short man's beard, 6. short man's shoe, 7. no musical note above the tall woman's hand



Dad said something that makes me really sad: he said that sometimes Grandma may not remember my name.

"She would forget who I am?" I cried. "No, no," Dad said, "She might not remember your name, but she will know you are someone she loves very, very much."

Together, Grandma and I go for walks, look at the trees and flowers, and listen to the birds sing. It's OK if we don't talk as much because we say everything we need to by holding hands and hugging.



### MEMORY MINUTE:

There are lots of ways you can express your love to someone living with Alzheimer's disease. You can smile, hold her hand, listen to her or go for walks together. Maybe the biggest way is just spending time with her!



CONNECT THE DOTS TO CREATE A PICTURE,  
THEN COLOR IT IN.

COLOR ME  
Memory



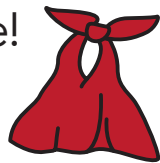


It scares me when Grandma forgets things, like when we play hide-n-seek and she forgets to look for me.

I'm worried about what is going to happen next for us, but I know it's super important that I love Grandma and make her feel special.

Sometimes Grandma has bad days where everything is confusing, but she still has plenty of good days when we laugh, play and throw stale bread to the ducks. On her bad days, I wish I could do more, but Dad said there is something I can do for Grandma, and it's my secret superpower. He said I can keep loving her, hugging her and spending time with her, because when I do, she always lights up and smiles. As things get harder for Grandma, she will need me more than ever.

I have a superpower? Who knew! But I'll still let Grandma play the superhero because she's my best friend, and anyway, she really does love that cape!

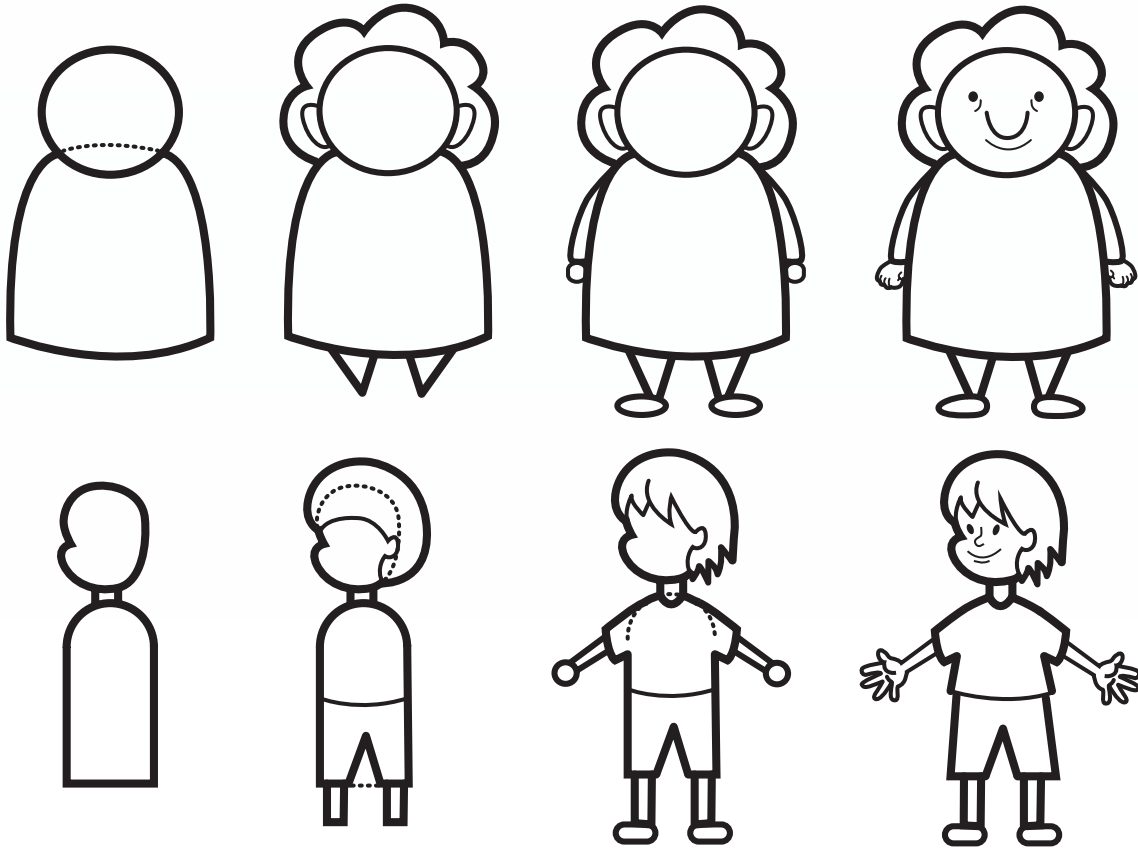


### MEMORY MINUTE:

Alzheimer's disease can be scary when it seems like your loved one doesn't know who you are anymore. But even if she doesn't remember your name, she will still know you as someone she loves and someone who is very special to her!

## LEARN TO DRAW GRANDMA AND HER GRANDCHILD

1. In the box below, lightly draw the basic shapes.
2. Erase the guidelines and add details.



YOUR TURN:

A large empty rectangular box for drawing.

## MY GRANDPARENT'S LIFE STORY

What is your grandparent's life story? Spend some time asking your grandparent these questions and writing the answers in the blanks. Bet you will learn a lot!

1. I was born in \_\_\_\_\_  
(place)
2. My date of birth is \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)
3. Something I remember about my mother is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Something I remember about my father is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The games I played when I was young were \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. My favorite food as a child was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. My favorite holiday is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. My favorite family pets were \_\_\_\_\_,  
(type(s) of pets)  
and their names were \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. When I was young, I wanted to be this when I grew up \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(profession)

10. My first job was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. I fell in love with my spouse \_\_\_\_\_, and this is how we met:  
(name)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. My favorite adventure or vacation was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. The happiest moment in my life was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. My best advice I can give you as you grow up is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 10 PROMISES TO HELP ME VALIDATE MY GRANDPARENT ("VALIDATE" MEANS TO SUPPORT)


1. I will always show my grandparent lots of love, respect and patience. I know she's one of a kind, and she deserves to feel like she is important.
2. When my grandparent does something or says something that seems strange, I will not correct her or try to make her see things my way. I will accept her just as she is.
3. I will listen to my grandparent's words but also to what she's feeling inside. I will feel those things too. She will know that she can trust me, open up to me and feel better because I will be a good listener.
4. When my grandparent is sad, in pain or even angry, I will not blame myself or think that I have to make things better. All people have those feelings and need to let them out. When I help her do that, it will help her to feel better.
5. I will remember that if my grandparent says or does something unusual, something is causing her to do that. It may be hard for her to explain, and I won't expect her to explain.
6. If she can't remember things or speak like she once could, I won't expect her to remember everything or put it in words that I really understand.
7. I will accept that my grandparent might mix up people, places or things sometimes. If she does, I will try to see things from her point of view and what they mean to her.
8. Sometimes, my grandparent might be confused about what's going on around her. My job isn't to make her understand and think straight. I will try to understand how she sees things and what it means to her.
9. Because my grandparent is an adult and has lots of life experience, I will respect her and try not to fib to her. When I'm unsure of what to say or do, I will ask my parents or another caregiver.
10. I will accept my grandparent may think back to an event from long ago. Because my grandparent has lived so long, she often is reminded of things from the past. People, places, smells and even how something tastes can take her back to a moment from the past, like she is reliving it all over again. Rather than dismiss that, I will ask her to tell me more about it. We can share her stories together.

I promise to try my best to validate my loved one every time we are together.

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*Write your name on the line above*

## A LITTLE BIT ABOUT US

 Country Meadows Retirement Communities has 10\* senior living communities in Pennsylvania and one in Maryland, while our sister company, Ecumenical Retirement Community, is a non-profit community in Harrisburg, Pa. Together we have been serving and caring for older adults for more than 30 years through independent living, assisted living/personal care, memory support and restorative care. And we love what we do.

Both companies offer memory care for early- to late-stage memory loss and educational programs through support groups and Validation Method training for families and other senior care professionals. As we see it, the more we can help people understand the disease and how to live with it purposefully, the more meaningful relationships families will have.

This book is based on our many years of experience. We have a very dedicated, compassionate team of co-workers who focus on the individual, not the illness. In particular team members Joel Kroft, executive director of Memory Support Services, authored the Grandma's Cape story and the "Memory Minute" facts, and Stephen Klotz, B.A., M.Div., Certified Validation Master and executive director of Validation education, contributed the Validation Principles Pledge. As they do every day for our residents, we appreciate their shared expertise and guidance.

To learn more about memory loss and ways to support and connect with your loved one, visit **CountryMeadows.com** and **EcumenicalRetirement.org**. Or visit any of our campuses any day of the week. We'd love to meet you.

### **Country Meadows Retirement Communities:**

Allentown | Bethlehem | Forks of Easton | Frederick, MD  
Hershey | Lancaster | Mechanicsburg | South Hills of Pittsburgh  
Wyomissing | York – South | York – West  
\*coming soon to Gettysburg

### **Ecumenical Retirement Community:**

Harrisburg

alzheimer's  association®

Alzheimer's Workplace Alliance

  
**Ecumenical Retirement**  
COMMUNITY

  
**COUNTRY MEADOWS**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES



*Memory loss can never erase  
the emotional connection between loved ones.  
A moment may be lost, but not the love.*