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Hi,

I would like to tell you the story of how my lovely parents spent the last 3 years of their life. They immigrated from England as ten pound poms with 2 small children. My twin sister and I were born in 1954, our family of 6 had a block of land at Vale Park and Dad was working as a bricklayer. He would bring the scrap half bricks home on his motor bike and built a house from them which still stands to this day. When my twin sister and I started school my Mum went to teachers college and became a Primary school teacher. Dad also studied and became a welfare officer and worked for Community Welfare in South Australia until he retired. When they retired they moved near the beach and 10 years later Dad was diagnosed with dementia. Mum became a carer for Dad who was able to do most things but needed 'checking' because he forgot little things.

In July 2009 my mother was diagnosed with Bowel Cancer and we had to find respite care for dad while she was in hospital. She survived and I took a week off work to settle them both back into home and arrange services such as meals on wheels and a cleaner. I had been back at my home for a few days and got a call at 3am to say that Mum had suffered from a massive stroke and was in Flinders hospital. We then had to find more respite care for Dad and eventually found him long term care in Aldersgate Aged Care at Felixstowe. For the next month I was trying to keep my job and then picking up Dad, taking him to the hospital to see Mum, returning him to Aged care and then going home myself and they were 14 hour days. After over a month of Mum being in hospital we were lucky that someone had died and we managed to get Mum a placing at Aldersgate. They were in separate buildings in Aged care and unless a family member visited my Dad couldn't see the lady he had been married to for nearly 70 years. The routine in Aged care is that they get them up on a morning and if it is shower day that is done before dressing, then it is into the TV room to sit and look out of the window, with cups of tea and meals and then back into bed about 6pm at night. Most of the people in the area couldn't talk, had to be fed and then cleaned up when the Nappy became full. I tried to visit 3 or 4 times a week but it was so depressing and decided that I would rather not be alive than end my days like that. My Dad decided that he was going to stock-pile his medication and they were going to commit suicide together so he spat his tablets out after he was given them. Unfortunately when he showed me about 20 tablets he had managed to keep they were the wrong ones and he had kept Coloxyn which keep bowels open. They were both so unhappy and I didn't see either of them smile from the time they entered the nursing home. Dad died in January 2013 and Mum in August 2013.

Both of my parents had requests of No resuscitation, No intervention and Pain killing only and I have requested the same. But why can't I state now that if I need to go into a nursing home I no longer want to be on this earth and my life could end. It makes me really upset and angry that we keep people alive as 'vegetables' but we are able to make a humane decision to put our pets down.

Sally Hallsworth

