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ENTERTAINMENT

Novi's Keith Famie tells the story of Alzheimer's in new film

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Keith Famie's new documentary gets personal. Famie — an award-winning, Novi-based producer and director — looks at the serious topic of Alzheimer's disease and dementia in the film, and it's something he has dealt with up close.

"I lost my father in 2003 to Alzheimer's, and I was deeply active in caring for him," he says. "I always vowed I would produce a film about the complicate journey someone takes who loses who they are and just how

complicated it is for loved ones to not only care for their family member but watch as they forget who they are."

That mission has turned into a 2-hour film called "Those on the Front Lines of Alzheimer's & Dementia." The documentary, which was produced by Famie's Visionalist Entertainment Productions, will air at 9 p.m. on June 27 on Channel 56 in Detroit.

Famie checked in with the Oakland Press to discuss Alzheimer's and his journey creating this film.

Q: What do you think are the main public misconceptions about Alzheimer's disease?

A: I think there are so many misconceptions. One misconception is that it's all genetics, when it's not. How we live our lives today will determine how we age tomorrow, cognitively. One of the most upsetting items I learned is that by the time someone is symptomatic, the ravages of dementia has been building up for years going unnoticed.





Keith Famie, a Novi-based producer and director, looks at the serious topic of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Courtesy Visionalist Entertainment

Q: When you started creating this documentary, what was your vision for it? How did your vision evolve as you got into it?

A: I approach all of our documentary film productions with an open mind. I really don't go on the journey with a set path. I want to see where the story is going to take me. I was very surprised and enlightened by what we discovered about how so many elements in our environment can have a significant impact on our cognitive health.

Q: What do you hope people take away from this documentary?

A: It's very clear: We all take our brain health for granted. We all, me included, need to acquire a new level of discipline for our cognitive well-being. I am sure this film will create many moments for the audience to look into their mirror and ask, "Am I treating my body and brain the best way I should be?"

Q: What was the most inspiring thing about putting together this film?

A: The unsung heroes in the film are clearly those who allowed us to share their very personal stories of caring for a loved one. I was very moved by the work of Teepa Snow, who has literally changed the way we communicate with those trapped on a dementia journey.

Visit the film's website at <http://ontodayfrontlines.com/alzheimers/>. Watch the film's trailer at <https://vimeo.com/272599768>.