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Dementia and the cycle of role reversal: Always a matriarch

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My grandmother is an 88-year-old African American woman with dementia. My project seeks to explore the role dementia has played within my family, specifically, how the cycle of role reversal has shaped the matriarch position my grandmother once held within my family.

Discussion: Topic will be facilitated by my grandmother, her children and grandchildren. Literary works include publications that focus on dementia as a symptom and dementia as it pertains to the role of caretakers. These works were used to demonstrate differences between written text and what it means to face dementia outside of text. The final project will take the form of a documentary that seeks to capture the emotions and realities my family has had to face as a result of my grandmother's condition. The documentary is different from a paper because in many ways, it serves as a case study that helps to build personality and impact. This personality and impact will ultimately help viewers paint an image of what life looks like for a person with dementia and how the conditions that are attributed to dementia, impact surrounding individuals (i.e. family).

Conclusion: The documentary will be guided by the recognition of a role reversal and reflections on memories before and after my grandma's condition began and continued to worsen. These memories help to allow individuals to recognize the changes dementia can have on what may be considered a person's everyday routine. These memories will also help viewers connect to the content due to the raw nature of the responses given by interviewees and the unfortunate realities dementia presents. These answers help to paint the image of a matriarch and a change in the hierarchal roles within the family at large.

Biography

Naomi Lilly is a Member of the class of Duke University 2020. She is studying African American Studies and Gender Studies and pursuing a Certificate in Documentary Studies. At Duke, she is a Member of the Penny Pilgram Cohort, the Political Chair Co-President for Duke's NAACP chapter, a Member of the Duke Deja Blue Acapella Group and a Content Creator for The Bridge (an online publication). Her academic interests include gender and racial injustice, the role of activism in today's society and the media's growing impact with issues related to social injustice(s).

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