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## Memories

Amy Goldberg  
*NSU University School*

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## Memories

*Amy Goldberg*

Some of the warmest memories of my childhood took place in my grandmother's house. I distinctly remember her making spaghetti for me, standing over her stove in a floral house dress, stirring the sauce. She was always ready to dish out more of her spaghetti or wipe the excess sauce off my chin. I can still smell the tomatoes and herbs, hear the cracking of the plastic covers on the furniture, and taste the spaghetti. All of those made me feel safe, secure, and loved.

Sitting at the small kitchen table and talking to my grandmother while she cooked was the greatest idea in the world. She would snap the hard sticks in half, boil them, and pour on that delicious, red sauce.

In that aromatic kitchen, I told my grandmother what I was doing in school, including the difficulties of learning to spell and add. In return, to show me how wonderful I was, she gave me a smile or nod. If I tried to spell a word for her and missed the first few times, she always responded as if it were the first try. She would stand at the stove, stirring the sauce.

It is now many years later, and my grandmother is suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. She has no idea who I am, and I have no way of knowing if she even remembers my visits. I still

visit her and tell her about school, with stories about spelling "sugar", changing to A.P. European History, and algebra. Her smile and nod look as polite as those of an innocent child. Her face is blank, missing the spark it had over the stove many years ago. Then, I focus on her hands, and I can still see those hands gently holding a wooden mixing spoon, stirring that sauce. When I kiss her good-bye, for a fleeting instant I feel exactly as I did as a small girl in her kitchen. I know the love and memories of the best spaghetti in the world will stay in my mind forever.

I learned love in my grandmother's kitchen over steaming plates of spaghetti. I have no idea what goes on in her mind now, but a part of me likes to think that buried in there somewhere is the memory of my visits.