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Alzheimer's disease is hard to talk and think about and even harder to

accept. It pitilessly cuts the afflicted off from the self and points out to all of us how fragile the mind is. There is perhaps no expression more fitting than the term "loss of soul", used by some tribal societies, to express the universal fear brought on by this disease. Its landscape lies at the furthest limit along the continuum of mental decline that is in its milder form a normal part of aging. Like a mythical land, it lies beyond the sun, far from the hum of life. It calls to mind the river Lethe, the river of forgetfulness of Greek and Roman myth, from which mortals must drink before embarking on the journey to the underworld. I made a sculpture of the Alzheimer's Madonna because I felt a need to address the fear of Alzheimer's Disease. Both figures in the sculpture turn in a spiraling motion, as in a dance. As she stands at the beginning of adult life, he marks the end. Together, they form a kind of whole, as we each, in our own psyche, carry them inside of us- the image of hope, and youthful beauty, which denies any reality but eternal youth; the image of our decline, of the waning of our powers.

March 2008

Vol. 165, No. 3:293-410

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY

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Official Journal of the  
AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

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[Alzheimer's Madonna, AJP front cover]



*[Alzheimer's Madonna, 5ft x 5ft x 5ft]*