

Language Needs

- Use short words
- Use clear and simple sentences
- Speak slowly and calmly
- Questions should ask for a “yes” or “no” answer
- Talk about one thing at a time
- Talk about concrete things; not abstract ideas
- Use common phrases
- Always say what you are doing
- If they repeat their question, repeat your answer as you did the first time
- Give them a longer time to process information
- Wait patiently for a response
- Be accepting of inappropriate answers and nonsense words
- Speak softly, soothingly and gently



Care Needs

- Recognize that receiving personal care feels intrusive
- Reassure with your tone and manner
- Do one thing at a time
- Talk through the care “play-by-play”
- Be aware of your body language and use it to communicate relaxation and reassurance
- Be sincere
- Use a soft, soothing touch
- Be aware of the individual’s unique triggers
- Be aware that a person with dementia may not accurately judge whether a situation is threatening to them
- They may respond to fear, pain or anxiety by defending themselves with what we call “aggression”
- If they become distressed, stop immediately and allow them time to calm down – don’t try to restart the activity right away

*You need to change **your** behaviour to **adapt** to the dementia because the person with the disease cannot.*

Alzheimer *Society*

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How to Interact With People Who Have Dementia

(with Memory Loss)



A Person with Dementia:

(Especially those with Alzheimer Disease)

- Likely has a poor memory for recent events
- Gets lost and loses things
- Is restless, anxious and easily distracted
- Has emotional swings
- Has poor judgement
- May be socially inappropriate
- Will forget how to do everyday tasks
- Has difficulty understanding what is said to them
- Will forget what things are
- Has difficulty knowing what to say because they forget words and how to express themselves with language
- Becomes afraid of social interaction



What is needed?

People with dementia need caring people to help them:

- Stay relaxed
- Feel secure
- Feel that you mean them no harm
- Raise their self-esteem

When you care:

- Be aware that how **you** behave can determine the mood and reaction of the person with dementia
- Concentrate on and adapt to the mood and state of mind of the person with dementia while interacting with them

***Use
Unconditional
Positive
Regard***

THE “DON'TS”

- Do not reason and argue
- Do not demand that they reason or problem-solve
- Do not demand that they remember
- Do not demand that they get their facts straight
- Do not correct their ideas or scold them
- Do not reorient them
- Do not think that they are being uncooperative on purpose
- Do not think that they really do remember, but are pretending not to
- Do not use a “bossy” dictatorial attitude in care
- Do not act with impatience



DO

- Enter into their frame of reality or their “world”
- Be aware of their mood or state of mind
- Use few words and simple phrases
- OR use no words, just friendly gestures and simple motions
- Do everything slowly
- Approach from the front
- Wait for a slow response
- Constantly reassure them that everything is OK
- Keep people with dementia comfortable “in the moment” – every moment
- Maximize use of remaining abilities
- Limit TV or radio programs which they may feel are frighteningly real
- Maintain privacy
- Provide a safe physical environment