

Practical Advice for the Caregiver

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Understanding Our Loved Ones with Dementia

- Consider that our behaviors derive from our emotions.
- If we're feeling tired or stressed we may be different than if we are relaxed and well rested.

Understanding Our Loved Ones with Dementia

- Our residents often feel confused, tired, stressed, afraid or sad.

These are all natural reasons why they may react differently than they did before they had dementia.

Understanding Our Loved Ones with Dementia

- If we can understand why they are feeling a certain way, then we can help to better care for them through environment, structure and communication.
- In turn, this will help you as the caregiver.

Dementia Exercise

- Close your eyes
- How do you feel?
- What do you want to do?



The Environment

- Lighting
- Noise
- The amount of people
- Perception of space
- Simple or routine can be challenging
- Temperature



The Importance of Structure

- We all need a schedule
- We all need a routine
- We all need a purpose
- Understand when they are at their best. Use that time of the day to schedule certain activities like doctor's appointments or daily exercise.



Communication

- Provide the answers
- Provide clear and simple instructions
- Provide plenty of time and repeat if necessary
- Reassure and Redirect



Keeping Notes

- Keep a journal to refer to after a period of time, this is especially helpful for doctor's appointments.
- You then can predict the routine and anticipate how to avoid it. This will help with reducing their anxiety and your stress.

Example: Restlessness and irritability every evening after dinner while you wash the dishes. Plan a long walk or put on his favorite music program right at the end of dinner to avoid this and wash the dishes later.



Reducing Caregiver Stress

- Stop and smell the roses...Literally!
Schedule the time for you alone and together.
- Take advantage of the resources available with day care, home care, respite care and an assisted living community.
- Join a support group
- Take your family and friends up on their offers to help



Reducing Caregiver Stress

Keep you and your loved one active and involved. Use your skills and give them the opportunity to use theirs for as long as possible.

Key tips to maintain their skills and abilities:

- 1 - At their level**
- 2 - Set up for success**
- 3 - Accomplishment**



You're braver
than you believe,
stronger than you
seem, and smarter
than you think.

Winnie the Pooh



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Questions?

Thank You!