

MOTIVATION FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

In a recent article published by the BBC we learnt some interesting insights to Dementia.

As a person living with Dementia in this article is quoted as saying: "I am still me, even though I've got Dementia. Dementia hasn't got me" - which is a very positive mindset to have!

While 55 million have Dementia globally according to the World Health Organisation, estimates from studies conducted in South Africa in 2022, indicate that the prevalence of Dementia ranges up to 11.0% for adults aged 65 years or older. In other words, up to one out of 10 people may have Dementia in SA in this age group. Here are some ideas on seeking help and hope along the journey of a Dementia diagnosis.

ASK FOR HELP

- When diagnosed with Dementia, you need to get help as soon as possible.
- Ask for help, even if you are not good at asking for help.
- Talk to a neurologist / psychiatrist and ask them to explain, what sections of the brain are affected and how that will impact on e.g., temperament; decision-making and empathy. This will help you and your family cope with changes.
- Find out what services are in your area and take advantage of them - sign up to everything.

- Fill your lives with positive things - get a really good group of friends around you who can cope with your diagnosis, because some people can't cope with Dementia.
- Join a peer support group or even someone else recently diagnosed with Dementia; which is so important because they are the only people that can truly have empathy about what it's like to actually live with Dementia.
- Join groups of your peers, talk to your peers, learn from your peers, listen to your peers, and in years to come, you can teach your fellow peers if diagnosed what you've learnt because you're the best teacher of what it's like to live with Dementia.
- Your spouse /life partner or primary support person will also benefit from similar support.
- If you are the primary person involved with someone living with Dementia- You've got to look after yourself as well, because if you don't look after yourself, who's going to look after the person that you love and care for?

DON'T GIVE UP HOPE

- Don't live your life in fear and withdraw from society- get out and about- live life as you can, when you can.
- There is no need to sit in an armchair and look at television all day, because that is just going to go downhill.
- Understand it's not hopeless - there is much to be done- carry on with embracing your life and do the best you can!