



TOP TIPS FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

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It is very useful to speak to those living with the condition and their families. We share their tips below for living with the condition; how to talk to people with Dementia; and how they have learned to adjust to their changing brains.

COMMUNICATE, DON'T TALK DOWN

Communicating with person with Dementia?

- Talk to the person, not the Dementia and speak in shorter sentences.
- Get down to the person's level - if the person is sitting on the couch, don't stand over them and talk down, go to their level and maintain eye contact.
- Don't ask multiple questions at once - you know like, 'Who, what, why, where and when?' all in one question - because they can't process that.
- Think about the questions you are asking. Don't always ask directly ;rather start a question by asking , "Do you remember...?"
- Some people aren't comfortable with silence, so they'll start saying something instead. Don't start talking for the person with Dementia because you don't like the silence, or answer the question for them. Allow free talk because if we don't use it, we lose it. Allow for answering of questions, or they lose the ability to answer the questions themselves.

- Assist with activities that promote engagement, such as reading or watching the news, current affairs discussions, crosswords, using the Luminosity App on cellphone for brain elasticity and going through photographs of events and places and talking about them.

ORGANISATION- GET ORGANISED

- A top tip shared to cope is to have a diary or memory calendar.
- Instead of just a cellphone number -it is useful to save a photograph of the person or of the place with the telephone number to jog memory -for example for the doctor's surgery, have a photograph of the surgery.
- Get a digital clock that has large text to show the time, date, day and the year, to give clues about what day it is.
- If you are living alone, get into a set routine and write everything down.
- Have a checklist on the door of things you need such as keys, credit card, sunglasses, etc. when you leave home.
- Make lists of all the things you cant remember ;as well as laminate A4 posters with reminders as prompts and paste on your cupboard or fridge.
- Set an alarm on your cellphone to remind you to do certain activities-save the alarm time with the thing that you are supposed to do at that time.
- Adapt your environment as dementia can affect vision and and spatial awareness. Visual clues can include such as bright coloured doorframes to help you find specific rooms.
- Practical solutions include bright painted doorframes -helping you find your way.
- Get blister packs from the pharmacy to help you remember when to take medication or make arrangements for administration of medication.

Do what it takes to stay in your house and be independent, as long as reasonably possible-get help as and when required-but try to stay involved with your daily activities and enjoy every moment!