



Caring for someone with dementia/ memory issues



To help your relative to 'Live Well With Dementia' you can support them to remain independent and feel included, plan for the future together, look for different types of therapies or treatments to help them to live a full and active life. People can live well with some form of memory issues or dementia for 10 to 15 years and being positive in your support will help them to be active and independent for as long as possible.

Communication

As the disease progresses, communication can become difficult, people may start to live more in the past, talking about events from many years ago as though it is today but forgetting what they did 10 minutes ago. They may not recognise you and forget the names of objects or people, they may struggle to join in conversations, say how they feel or follow simple instructions. Remember:

Do not argue – this will just upset them and may cause more problems for you. Just agree with them, use humour and laughter to lighten situations and if you need to - just walk away for a while.

Avoid correcting mistakes – if you know what they are trying to say just accept it. If you are not sure, try and use other methods – writing it down or using pictures.

Reduce distractions – avoid noisy or crowded places, it is easier to talk one to one. Be aware of the tone of your voice, the speed and volume, make sure you are sitting close to them. Do not keep asking lots of questions, allow them time to think of their answers.

Non-verbal communication

Body language – if your relative struggles to talk to you, body language and facial expressions become more important. Try to be aware of your own body language and what it is saying. Also try and understand the body language and facial expressions of the person with dementia. Are they showing sympathy, anger, frustration, or pain? Give them your full attention, create a safe environment, allowing time and reduce distractions – this will allow better communication and understanding.



There are many different communication aids – for example wipe on/wipe off boards, diaries, clocks, pill dispensers and other technologies, such as Alexa can all help.

