MCM PRIVATE CARE

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Dementia Care *Checklist*

Dementia is very, very difficult to understand. It's very difficult to treat, and it's an enormous burden on families and caregivers.

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AT A GLANCE

1. **Do not shame your loved one**
2. **Don’t tell them “you’re wrong.”**
3. **Distract your loved one**
4. **Don’t remind them repeatedly**
5. **Offer two choices only**
6. **One command at a time**
7. **Speak clearly and slowly about each action**
8. **Don’t talk about a person in front of them.**
9. **Don’t laugh at them; laugh with them.**
10. **New information, appointments, and company coming**

Kind, patient and *loving*

Part 1

Do not shame them, bully them, or admonish them

1

Do not shame your loved one

You can contribute to their increased anxiety, frustration, and depression.

✓ **Reorienting a person with dementia is just a bad idea.**

2

Don’t tell them “you’re wrong.”

Just go with what they say. One tenet I live by is that it is more important to be kind than to be right.

✓ **If she's happy it's Monday, let it be Monday.**

3

Distract your loved one

Remember to implement distraction with your cognitively impaired loved one; it may be the only way to break the cycle of their perseveration.

✓ **“I really like that outfit you have on; is it new?”** ✓ **“Let’s look at this book right here.”**

4

Don’t remind them repeatedly

If they ask where a person who passed away is, you can let this lead to another topic about that person’s life.

5

Offer two choices only

Open-ended questions are confusing because they cannot recall their options.

✓ **“Do you want cereal or pancakes?”**

Part 2

Dignity for each person is the standard

6

One command at a time

It is an overload of information. Their brain does not work like it used to.

✓ **“Let’s get your shoes on. Let’s take a ride.”**

7

Speak clearly and slowly about each action

Surprise moves without explanation are more apt to cause a person with dementia to “act out” with aggression.

✓ **In a calm reassuring voice**

8

Don’t talk about a person in front of them.

Despite having dementia, they can still hear and should be respected as adults. They are able to feel shame, sadness, and anger.

✓ **Talk to them like the adult that they are, not like they are a child.**

9

Don’t laugh at them; laugh with them.

Sometimes they know they mixed something up and laugh at it. It is OK to do that, but to laugh at them is shaming them when they say something inaccurately.

10

New information, appointments, and company coming

Don’t tell your loved one that they are going to an appointment the next morning and expect them to remember it when they wake up.

✓ **Even written notes are not always the answer.**

> *“They need your love and support, not your criticism and correction.”* **— Andrea Kohn, RN, CRNP, *Return to Sender***

Much easier said *than done*

Just go with what they say

INSTEAD OF...	TRY...
“What do you want for breakfast?”	“Do you want cereal or pancakes?”
“Mom, it's not Monday, it's Thursday.”	If she's happy it's Monday, let it be Monday.
“You keep saying that.”	“I really like that outfit you have on; is it new?”
Get their shoes on, go for a ride, and go to the store	“Let’s get your shoes on. Let’s take a ride.”

A customized care plan

keep everyone on the same page

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Fluids							
Meals							
Bathroom							
Exercise							
Activities							
Sleep							

Write down the facts

Date	What happened	What helped

Notes

Hold your hand through *the process*

Safety

- [ ] Check the environment out.
- [ ] Are things locked up appropriately?
- [ ] Is there too much drinking going on?
- [ ] Overseeing the medication

Care plan

- [ ] Safety/fall risk
- [ ] Risk of dehydration
- [ ] Appropriate exercise routines
- [ ] Brain stimulation with conversations or activities

Care team

- [ ] Community resources like day programs
- [ ] Geriatric case managers
- [ ] Nurse case managers and home health agencies
- [ ] Geriatric psychiatrists and nurse practitioners

For you

- [ ] Get into a support group
- [ ] It is OK to step outside and collect yourself
- [ ] Caregiver stress in a family member is real.
- [ ] Families need training or therapy

When do I get somebody in here? when things become unsafe

- ⚠ **Not recognizing their home**
- ⚠ **Your loved one is falling**
- ⚠ **Not locking the doors or leaving the doors open**
- ⚠ **They can also be taken advantage of**
- ⚠ **Driving when they're unsafe**
- ⚠ **Showing up with unexplained injuries**
- ⚠ **They get confused about their medication**
- ⚠ **Your loved one is losing weight**

Any of these issues where you feel your loved one is unsafe is when we think it's time to bring somebody in.

We have a care team trained for this.

We have nurses who understand, we have specialized caregivers who can come in.

Call (240) 789-4890



★★★★★ *"My mother is physically strong but suffers with Lewy body dementia... I am extremely satisfied with the service... placed my trust in MC Management Company who listens to your need and selects the right person for your individual situation."* — Toni M.



Return to Sender
by Andrea S. Kohn