

Top 10 Dementia Care Do's and Don'ts

Dementia Care Do's	Dementia Care Don'ts or Things to Avoid
DO make sure the person has daily stimulation activities. Use all their senses – taste, touch, smell, hearing, sight. TV and crossword puzzles don't count. Examples: Flowers, dog parks, concerts/live music, spices, foods, textured fabric	Avoid putting your loved one in a noisy, overwhelming environment. For celebrations and outings, have a companion for the person so that if they get overwhelmed, the companion can take them to a quiet space.
DO stay with them in busy, crowded areas. This applies even to places they are familiar with.	Avoid dropping them off while you park the car. Avoid giving instructions such as "Meet me at front of the restaurant."
DO inspect the car for damage and go with them periodically while they drive.	Avoid taking away the keys. Take away the car. Give them old house keys.
DO give them time to process and respond to conversations. It may take 10-20 seconds for them to respond.	Avoid assuming they're incapable. Give them the chance to try and even to fail. Then acknowledge you struggle sometimes, too. Normalize the challenges as much as possible. Support them rather than correct them.
DO find creative ways for them to feel normal. Examples: Let them have their car keys, wallet, purse, favorite clothes	Avoid giving them anything that they have to be responsible for. This includes a cell phone, checkbook, and credit or debit cards. Phones are dangerous because even fully cognitive people get scammed. Those 60 years and up are being targeted heavily.
BONUS: DO have boundaries for yourself when it comes to alone time, sleep, exercise, and time with friends.	Avoid isolating yourself with your loved one with dementia. That's not good for either of you.

Have questions? Email Pam Ostrowski at Pam@ItsNotThatSimple.com.