



Living at Garden View Care Center is Fun!
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Dementia: Treasure the Moment

As aging and dementia bring about changes in our loved ones and friends, it is often difficult to know how to maintain good communication and make productive visits. Sometimes these changes make them seem to be less and less the person we knew and loved, and we may feel conflicted and frightened. Often, avoidance and guilt are the result. However, we can learn to have meaningful visits and mutually rewarding conversations with our loved ones who have dementia. Remembering a couple key points can help us begin the process.

Prepare yourself. The treasured aspects of our lives seldom transpire without preparation.

Accepting unpleasant change as an inevitable part of life is difficult, but if we agree to face present reality and deal honestly with our emotions, we are more likely to have the psychological resources to move forward into the unknown.

Prepare yourself by learning all you can about the disease process. Lack of knowledge places us at a disadvantage. Arm yourself with the knowledge of what to expect.

Validate. The validating person accepts the deterioration of their loved one, enters that person's world, and becomes a trusting nurturing presence. When a trusted listener validates and reflects painful feelings, often those feelings are diminished.

Above all, do not judge; either your loved one or yourself. Adapting to the changes brought about by dementia is one of the most difficult challenges that life presents.

Allow yourself the grace to make mistakes. This, like many things in life, is a learning process.