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SHARING RESOURCES

Tips for Families of Persons Living with Dementia

Contributed by: In the Moment

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Our stress levels are a little higher during this time especially if your Loved One normally goes to an Adult Day Center or you usually have help in your home that you do not have anymore. So here are a few ideas to help you through your day.

Some people living with dementia may have an increased risk of getting the virus due to forgetting to stay six feet away from others, wash their hands and not touch their face, which are things we should ALL be doing.

Overall Tips

1. You need to adapt your actions to meet their needs. They are not going to wash their hands more or use sanitizer. Because of this you need to be creative and find ways to help them. (see next page).
2. Slow down. Take a breath. I believe folks living with dementia have a sixth sense and can pick up on our anxiety and nervousness. Let's not pass that on to each other.
3. Understand that they may not be able to express what they are feeling or hearing you talk about. They may feel scared, which is normal. Watch for non-verbal cues about this so you can help them feel less stressed.
4. Try not to get frustrated when they are frustrated.
5. I know this is almost impossible right now, but try to find something that gives you happiness in all of this. Even if it is 2 minutes alone with a Double Stuf Oreo.

Focus on the strengths of your Loved One, their talents and abilities. You need to adapt to meet them where they are.

At home

Caregiving is not easy at times and caregiving during a pandemic just adds layers you have never had to deal with before. Here are a few tips & ideas for you to help keep everyone less stressed and healthy.

1. Put up more reminders. This helps everyone. If your person is having trouble reading reminders, try drawing a picture.



2. Wash hands together and sing together for 20 seconds:
We know Happy Birthday, but that could get confusing when your Loved One may expect cake after each hand washing. Other songs work too. There is the refrain from Dolly Parton's hit Jolene:

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene,
I'm begging of you please don't take my man.
Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene.
Please don't take him just because you can.

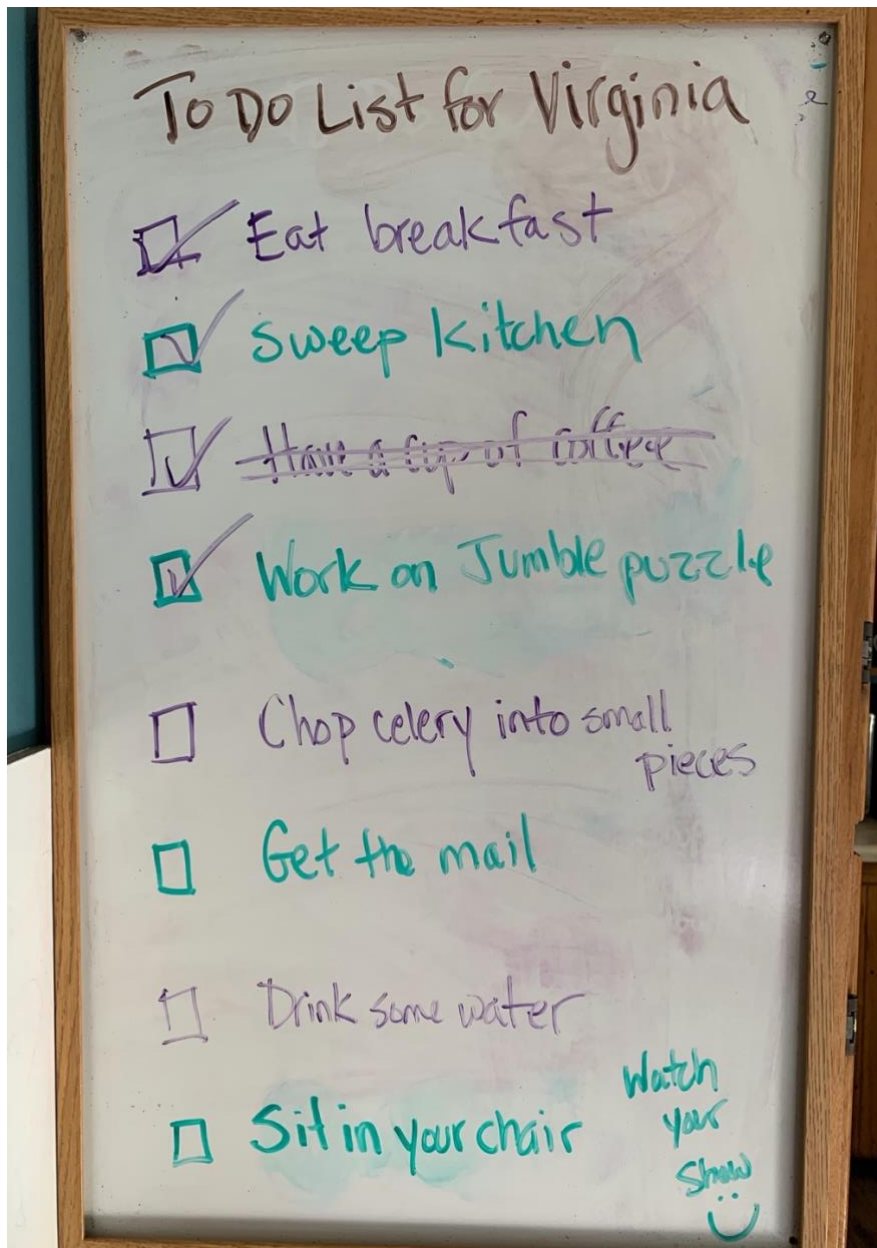
Or maybe a little from Queen:

"We will, we will rock you (rock you)." Say 3 times.
or change to: "We will, we will wash you."

Or maybe Woody Guthrie:

This land is your land, this land is my land
From California to the New York island
From the Redwood Forest, to the gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

3. Try to stay away from the news. It's scary out there right now and for a person who may not understand everything that is happening (or even a person who does) it may be best to watch something else on TV.
4. Create a story together. See TimeSlips.org
5. Make a cool collage from magazines. A food collage or things you think are pretty, or all animals, or whatever.
6. Take a walk every day. Just stay 6 feet away from other people and wave at them and smile, instead of getting closer or hugging!
7. Ask other family members to send video messages or emails in large font that you can show to or print out for your Loved One.
8. Try our In-Home Scavenger Hunt. Our version is at the end of this document.
9. Pick one of the videos to watch together on the internet. You can find everything. Your Dad always loved fishing? There's a video compilation of the best fishing moments. Even one of a lady who always wears a bikini fishing. I put the link in my list.) Or laughing Babies? Or pictures of Dogs? Just use Google.
10. Have a "To Do List" for you and for your Loved One. Think about things the person can still do. We tried to have a variety of things for Mom to do that were purposeful. Also, we tried to mix up the list so she wasn't sitting or standing too long. Sometimes when she would finish an item, she would check the box and sometimes draw a line through it. This was also helpful when she forgot that she ate breakfast; we would look at the board and she would laugh and say, "Look, I already ate."



11. Do things together. Take a walk. Color a picture you can print out from a museum website. Paint nails.
12. Create a poem using the letters of their name as the first letter of a word that describes them.
13. Bake something and double it. Your Loved One can help even if it is handing you ingredients or stirring. Give extra to a neighbor. Ding Dong Ditch a Baked Good!

14. Everyday chores. What normal things can your loved one help with? Clean out a closet? Clean out the fridge? Sweep the kitchen?
15. MUSIC! We always have music playing. You can use a music service for free (there will be commercials) but you can make playlists of songs you both like and dance and just have music playing while you are together.
16. Send cards or letters to your family. Have your loved one write a note to each or at least put the stamp on and lick the envelope. My Mom could always make her trademark XOXO's at the bottom.

If your Loved One lives in a Care Community

Many care communities are closed to any visitors. Here are a few ideas to keep in contact or to say Thank you to the staff and Hello to the residents.

1. See if a staff person can help you video call your Loved One.
2. Go outside a window and hold up pictures or messages on a dry erase board. Even better you can write on glass with dry erase markers.
(Uoy evah ot etirw sdrawkcab hguoht)
3. Write positive messages to the staff and residents on the sidewalks in chalk.
4. Slip a card everyday under the door or in the mailbox of the Care Community
5. Know someone with a talent? How about a dance, a song or a little clowning outside of the window or record it and send it to the Community?
6. Bake something yummy for the staff and residents and include the recipe.
7. Send the list of online videos below to the Care Community for them to use.
8. You live far away from your Loved One? Send a package via the internet. Depending on what your Loved One's abilities are, here are a few ideas:
 - Soft comfy socks
 - Something yummy they like to eat.
 - Nice smelling lotion
 - A new mug and tea they like
 - Subscription to a magazine; Good Housekeeping, Reminisce, Field & Stream, something in their interests.
 - If they do puzzles send a jigsaw or words search books

- They grew up on a farm? Maybe a coffee table book on farms. They love Ireland? Maybe a book about that. You get the idea.
- If they wear compression socks, check out: [Colorful Compression Socks](#)
- A weighted blanket.
(**Weighted blankets** help ground your body during sleep by pushing it downwards. This process, known as “earthing” or “grounding,” may have a deeply calming effect. The **blankets** also simulate deep pressure touch (DPT), a type of therapy that uses firm, hands-on pressure to reduce chronic stress and high levels of **anxiety**)

Here are some online resources.

Videos

[Stella's Best Leaf Jumps](#)

[NASA'S Entire Photo Library](#)

[Storyline Online: Betty White](#)

[Milwaukee County Zoo Animal Cams](#)

[Tour of Buckingham Palace](#)

[Tours of 33 National Parks](#)

[Broadway Plays and Musicals](#)

[San Diego Zoo Fun Stuff](#)

[Baby Animals](#)

[Funny animals](#)

[Babies Laughing](#)

[Commercials from the 50's & 60's](#)

[Free Classical Music](#)

[The Metropolitan Opera: Free Operas](#)

[Shakespeare at the Globe Theatre](#)

[Archive of Old Movies](#)

[Archive of Old Time Radio](#)

[Archive of Old Books](#)

Tutorial

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[How to Make a Face Mask](#)

[15 minute workouts](#)

[Canning Peaches](#)

[How to Tie Knots](#)

Pictures

[Floating Dogs: Pictures](#)

[Joy's of Owning a Dog](#)

[Pictures of Cats](#)

[The National Portrait Gallery](#)

[Close-ups of famous paintings](#)

[Cool Animal Pictures](#)

Jokes, Puzzles & Pintables

[Jokes from Reader's Digest](#)

[Clean Jokes](#)

[Printable Word Searches](#)

[Printable Coloring Pages](#)

[Museum Coloring Pages](#)

IN YOUR HOME SCAVENGER HUNT

See if you can find these things in your house.

Put a check in the box as you find it.

Picture of a baby

Potato peeler

Something that starts with the letter M

A Book with a Blue Cover

A cup of water (have a drink)

A Piece of Candy

Something you think is pretty

A Broom

Something that is very old

A Hat

Something that looks funny

Happy Things

L A S L I D C R S S L R
U A T G N R A V U M S B
X V U E U I Q A N I P H
F I I G N H L P S L I S
M R A B H O K A H E L A
F P O V V T E T I V U Y
N W Q E X T E V N U T U
S E R I C E C R E A M G
W E T B S E I K O O C L
E R M T E K A C E S A J
N S X Y I K U X I V E I
P U P P Y K J H P N B S

Try and find these words in the letters above.

| | | | |
|-------|----------|--------|----------|
| CAKE | COOKIES | FRIEND | TEA |
| HUGS | ICECREAM | KITTEN | PIE |
| LOVE | LAUGHTER | ROSES | TULIPS |
| PUPPY | RAINBOWS | SMILE | SUNSHINE |

You can go to this [link](#) and make your own word search about whatever topic you want. About them, about cars, about flowers.

All about Virginia

A H G U A L F N T E O T
W I C F H E I Z N V P I
C M N E X B C V O O T F
O O U I A H N A M L D A
C A W C G C H A R L E S
I A G E A R N R I G P C
W O K D L N I G A C I H
L E M E Y L K V F P E U
D C X Z G O E Q T J W R
H S Z P O O T T B S I C
L Y P C N V H N G H E H
Z L R I H U G S F C A W

Try and find these words in the letters above.

CAKE CHARLES CHURCH COOK

COWELL FAIRMONT GRACE HUGS

LAUGH LOGCABIN LOVE MANNY

PIE WESTVIRGINIA