



This Tool is based on an article by Sarah Knapton in the Telegraph 15th May 2016 “Dealing with dementia: those living with condition outline ‘dos and don’ts’ for friends and family”. Available at: www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/05/15/dealing-with-dementia-those-living-with-condition-outline-dos-an

The quotes are from people participating in a project called Dementia Diaries , an online community to allow people diagnosed with the condition to record their experiences.

- > "Eye contact is vital for us as emotions and facial expressions speak louder than words..."
- > "What makes me feel safe, secure and happy? A smile!"
- > "When you get tense and uptight, it makes me feel tense and uptight"
- > "Introduce yourself - don't assume we remember your name, always say 'hello my name is John' and you're looking very nice today"
- > "Be a good listener and when it's time to say goodbye, say good bye rather than see you later if you're not coming back that day"
- > "Never patronise or ridicule what a person with dementia says because we may forget what you said but we won't forget how you made us feel. Don't keep correcting us, otherwise we'll just go back into to our own world"
- > "But never assume that we don't understand, even when we appear to lose our ability to communicate, we still understand"
- > "Speak clearly and slowly using short sentences and encourage us to try and join in and keep the conversation light and humorous"
- > "Remember that you'll have to listen to the same stories over and over again but don't say you've already said that."
- > "Encourage us to join in conversations but please don't keep saying do you remember...it puts pressure on us. Give us time to respond, it takes us a few seconds more to think things through so don't put pressure on us, if you're in a conversation you're having with the person with dementia and we stop to talk please stop and let us have our say otherwise we may forget."
- > "Remember that background noise such as TV radio, people talking or traffic etc makes it very difficult for the person with dementia to understand a conversation. Be prepared for when the dementia takes over, there will be days when we are angry and days where we forget where we are in time. The more that you understand that it's not the person with dementia that is angry with you, the more you will bear what is to come."
- > "Having dementia is like being abroad, you can't read the signs, people don't understand you and you can't understand what they're saying, try and hang on to every word that the person with dementia is saying and it will help you understand where we are."
- > "I like people to treat me truthfully and honestly. And if I'm going to be in a care home, to be treated kindly, obviously, but truthfully and as honestly as they can, while maintaining that kindness. Lying doesn't help; if you tell people the truth, they'll come to terms with it eventually"