

Tips if someone you love is suffering from Alzheimer's disease  
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As this disease progresses it can be easy to forget the person you love is still there, many people get frustrated with their inability to communicate thoughts and remember names and faces. This terrible disease takes over, making the sufferer's loved ones become their mind, hands, and feet.

It's important to remember the person is more than the disease and not to argue with them. Be willing to let things go because engaging in an argument about a forgotten memory will only upset them and further frustrate you. The change in their personality and mood is due to the disease so it is important to distinguish that they themselves are not changing, but rather the disease is progressing.

Maintain a current list of medications and their dosages to ensure accuracy when sharing any medication information with doctors or other caregivers. It's also important to develop routines and predictable schedules to eliminate their confusion and frustration. Physical exercise, along with good nutrition such as limiting refined sugars and increasing vegetables, can help manage behaviour issues. Remember, even if you need to start the activity, it's important for them to accomplish as much as they can on their own.

Communication with your loved one through the disease can be trying at best, especially when verbal expression is no longer an option. In these cases, a simple touch on their arm can let them know they are loved. Your words and actions matter because emotions can be remembered even if the events themselves are not. The use of art, music, dance, poetry, drama, and reading are different methods you can use to connect with your loved one.

Take care of yourself by understanding your own physical and emotional limitations to avoid burnout. Take a few minutes to yourself every day and if you need someone to talk to, you can join an online or local support group. It's also advised to educate yourself about the disease because learning as much as you can about the progression of Alzheimer's can aid in your empathy with your loved one.

Alzheimer's is not a death sentence, with many people living more than 20 years following a diagnosis; so take advantage of the time you have left with them and remember to seek support for yourself as well. Turn to family and other loved ones for support when you're in need.