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Supporting Someone Living with Dementia Workbook

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Disclaimer

This workbook has been created by Safe Haven Connect CIC to provide general information and practical guidance for people supporting someone living with dementia.

The information is intended for family members, friends, carers and volunteers. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

If you have concerns about someone's health or safety, seek advice from their GP or an appropriate healthcare professional.

If there is an immediate medical emergency, contact your local emergency services.

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Supporting Someone Living with Dementia

PAGE 1 – Understanding Dementia

Supporting someone living with dementia can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging.

Dementia is not a normal part of ageing. It is a group of conditions that affect memory, thinking, communication and everyday activities.

Although dementia changes the way a person experiences the world, they are still the same person and deserve patience, dignity, kindness and respect.

Every person's experience of dementia is different.

♥ Dementia may affect...

- ☐ Memory
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Concentration
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Mood
- ☐ Behaviour
- ☐ Orientation (knowing where they are)
- ☐ Everyday tasks
- ☐ Other:

♥ What do I hope to learn from this workbook?

♥ What are my biggest worries about supporting someone with dementia?

♥ Remember

A person living with dementia is much more than their diagnosis.

Small acts of patience, kindness and understanding can make a meaningful difference to their wellbeing and quality of life.

Support the person—not just the condition.

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PAGE 2 – Understanding the Person

Every person living with dementia is unique.

Their personality, life experiences, interests and relationships remain an important part of who they are.

Taking time to understand the person—not just their diagnosis—can help you provide more meaningful and compassionate support.

♥ Things they enjoy

- ☐ Listening to music.
- ☐ Looking at family photographs.
- ☐ Gardening.
- ☐ Walking.

- ☐ Reading.
- ☐ Watching favourite TV programmes.
- ☐ Arts and crafts.
- ☐ Spending time with family.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Things that help them feel calm and comfortable

♥ Things that may upset or distress them

♥ How can I make them feel safe today?

- ☐ Speak calmly.

- ☐ Smile and be reassuring.
- ☐ Give them time to respond.
- ☐ Keep familiar routines.
- ☐ Reduce unnecessary noise.
- ☐ Offer simple choices.
- ☐ Show patience.
- ☐ Other:

Remember

Although dementia may affect memory and communication, feelings often remain.

A kind tone of voice, a reassuring smile and a patient approach can help someone feel safe, respected and valued.

People may forget what was said, but they often remember how they were made to feel.

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PAGE 3 – Communicating with Compassion

As dementia progresses, communication may become more difficult.

A person may struggle to find the right words, repeat themselves or become confused during conversations.

Your patience, tone of voice and body language can make a significant difference.

Remember, communication is about connection—not just words.

♥ Helpful ways to communicate

- ☐ Speak slowly and clearly.
- ☐ Use short, simple sentences.
- ☐ Maintain eye contact.
- ☐ Smile and use a calm tone.
- ☐ Give them time to answer.
- ☐ Listen without interrupting.
- ☐ Use gentle reassurance.
- ☐ Reduce distractions where possible.
- ☐ Other:

♥ If they repeat the same question...

- ☐ Answer calmly.
- ☐ Avoid showing frustration.
- ☐ Gently reassure them.
- ☐ Change the subject if appropriate.
- ☐ Use visual reminders if helpful.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Things I will try to remember

♥ What helps us communicate well?

♥ Remember

Someone living with dementia isn't trying to be difficult.

Their brain is processing information differently.

Responding with patience, reassurance and kindness can help reduce anxiety and build trust.

It's not about having the perfect words—it's about helping the person feel heard, safe and respected.

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PAGE 4 – Responding to Confusion and Memory Loss

Confusion and memory loss are common experiences for many people living with dementia.

They may forget recent conversations, become unsure where they are or believe something that isn't accurate.

Rather than correcting or arguing, try to respond with reassurance, patience and understanding.

Remember, how someone feels is often more important than whether every detail is correct.

♥ If they become confused, I can...

- ☐ Stay calm.
- ☐ Speak in a reassuring voice.
- ☐ Give simple explanations.
- ☐ Repeat information patiently.
- ☐ Redirect their attention if needed.
- ☐ Offer reassurance instead of arguing.
- ☐ Use familiar objects or photographs.
- ☐ Other:

♥ If they ask the same question several times...

- ☐ Answer patiently.
- ☐ Avoid saying "I've already told you."
- ☐ Reassure them.
- ☐ Write information down if helpful.
- ☐ Gently change the conversation.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Things that usually help reduce confusion

♥ How can I help them feel safe and reassured?

♥ Remember

A person living with dementia isn't choosing to forget.

Their experience is real to them, even if it doesn't match yours.

Responding with patience, reassurance and compassion can reduce distress and help them feel safe.

Kindness and reassurance often achieve far more than correction or confrontation.

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PAGE 5 – Supporting Daily Living

Everyday tasks can become more difficult as dementia progresses.

Simple activities such as getting dressed, preparing meals or washing may take longer or require extra support.

Encouraging independence where possible can help maintain confidence, dignity and a sense of purpose.

Remember, offering support doesn't mean taking over.

 Ways I can encourage independence

☐ Give one instruction at a time.

☐ Allow plenty of time.

☐ Offer encouragement.

☐ Keep daily routines consistent.

☐ Break tasks into smaller steps.

☐ Offer simple choices.

☐ Praise their efforts.

☐ Respect their independence.

☐ Other:

 Daily tasks they may need support with

☐ Washing and personal care.

☐ Getting dressed.

☐ Preparing meals.

☐ Taking medication.

☐ Shopping.

☐ Managing appointments.

☐ Household tasks.

☐ Other:

 Things they can still do independently

♥ One thing I can do to make today easier

♥ Remember

Focus on what the person can do rather than what they can't.

Every opportunity to remain involved in daily life can help maintain confidence, independence and wellbeing.

Support with patience, encourage independence and always protect the person's dignity.

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PAGE 6 – Looking After Yourself as a Carer

Supporting someone living with dementia can be rewarding, but it can also be physically and emotionally demanding.

Looking after your own wellbeing is not selfish—it helps you continue providing the best possible support.

You deserve care and support too.

♥ How am I feeling today?

- ☐ Calm
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Tired
- ☐ Stressed
- ☐ Overwhelmed
- ☐ Frustrated
- ☐ Lonely
- ☐ Worried
- ☐ Other:

♥ This week I will...

- ☐ Take regular breaks.
- ☐ Get enough sleep.
- ☐ Eat regular meals.
- ☐ Spend time outdoors.
- ☐ Talk to someone I trust.
- ☐ Accept help when it's offered.
- ☐ Make time for something I enjoy.
- ☐ Practice self-care.
- ☐ Other:

♥ People who support me

1.

2.

3.

♥ One thing I will do for myself this week

♥ Remember

You cannot pour from an empty cup.

Taking care of your own health and wellbeing helps you continue supporting the person you care about with patience, compassion and strength.

Looking after yourself is an important part of looking after someone else.

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PAGE 7 – Meaningful Activities and Staying Connected

Taking part in enjoyable activities can help a person living with dementia feel connected, valued and engaged.

The goal isn't to keep someone busy all the time—it's to create moments of enjoyment, comfort and purpose.

Choose activities that match the person's interests, abilities and energy levels.

 Activities they may enjoy

☐ Looking through family photographs.

☐ Listening to favourite music.

☐ Gardening.

☐ Baking or simple cooking.

☐ Going for a gentle walk.

☐ Watching birds or nature.

☐ Arts and crafts.

☐ Completing simple puzzles.

☐ Folding laundry.

☐ Looking after plants.

☐ Visiting familiar places.

☐ Other:

♥ Their favourite hobbies and interests

♥ Activities that bring a smile

♥ How can I help create meaningful moments?

☐ Encourage conversation.

☐ Laugh together.

☐ Play favourite songs.

☐ Celebrate small achievements.

☐ Spend quality time together.

☐ Be patient.

☐ Follow their pace.

☐ Other:

♥ Remember

A meaningful day doesn't have to be filled with activities.

Sometimes the most valuable moments are sharing a cup of tea, listening to music, holding a hand or simply sitting together.

It's not about doing more—it's about helping the person feel loved, included and valued.

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PAGE 8 – Planning Ahead Together

Planning ahead can help reduce stress and provide reassurance for both the person living with dementia and those supporting them.

Where possible, having conversations early allows the person's wishes and preferences to be understood and respected.

Planning isn't about expecting the worst—it's about preparing with care and compassion.

♥ Important information to think about

- ☐ Daily routines.
- ☐ Favourite foods.
- ☐ Favourite music.
- ☐ People who are important to them.
- ☐ Medical appointments.
- ☐ Medication.
- ☐ Emergency contacts.
- ☐ Future care wishes.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Things that are important to them

♥ Things that help them feel comfortable and secure

♥ My next practical step

- ☐ Organise important documents.
- ☐ Update emergency contact details.
- ☐ Talk with family members.
- ☐ Arrange a healthcare appointment if needed.
- ☐ Learn more about dementia.
- ☐ Ask for professional advice.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Remember

Planning ahead is an act of kindness.

It can provide reassurance, reduce uncertainty and help ensure that the person's wishes remain at the centre of future decisions.

Good planning today can make tomorrow feel a little easier for everyone involved.

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Every person living with dementia is different.

Having a personalised support plan can help you provide consistent, compassionate care while also reminding you to look after your own wellbeing.

Remember, you don't have to do everything perfectly. Being patient, present and caring makes a real difference.

♥ What helps them feel safe?

- ☐ Familiar routines.
- ☐ Calm surroundings.
- ☐ Gentle reassurance.
- ☐ Favourite music.
- ☐ Time with family.
- ☐ Quiet environments.
- ☐ Familiar objects or photographs.
- ☐ Other:

♥ My Daily Priorities

1.

2.

3.

People I Can Ask for Support

1.

2.

3.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone living with dementia, I want to remember...

Remember

Supporting someone with dementia isn't about having all the answers.

It's about helping them feel safe, respected, valued and loved.

Your patience, kindness and understanding can make a meaningful difference every single day.

The greatest gift you can give is your compassion.

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PAGE 10 – My Commitment as a Supporter

Congratulations on completing this workbook.

Supporting someone living with dementia can be one of the most meaningful and challenging roles a person takes on.

There will be good days and difficult days. On both, your patience, kindness and understanding can make a lasting difference.

Remember, you don't have to be perfect. Being present, compassionate and willing to learn is enough.

 I Will Remember To...

- ☐ Treat the person with dignity and respect.
- ☐ Be patient and give them time.
- ☐ Listen with kindness.
- ☐ Keep routines as consistent as possible.
- ☐ Encourage independence where appropriate.

- ☐ Focus on what they can do.
- ☐ Ask for support when I need it.
- ☐ Look after my own wellbeing too.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone living with dementia, I want to remember...

My Support Promise

"I will support this person with patience, kindness and compassion. I will remember that dementia changes the condition, not the person's value. I will celebrate small moments, respect their dignity and continue learning so I can provide the best support I can."

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Final Thoughts

Every smile, every reassuring word and every moment of patience matters.

Supporting someone living with dementia isn't about doing everything perfectly—it's about helping them feel safe, respected, valued and loved.

Thank you for taking the time to learn how to provide compassionate support.

Explore more free workbooks, resources and wellbeing tools at:

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 Supporting people, families, carers and communities with compassion.