

Aricep[®] 5mg
10mg
Donepezil HCl
The Therapy to Remember



*Tips for Better
Care*



RT/PEL-02/08-05

1. Individual profile and life review

Since dementia affects both the long and short-term memory, the family care-giver would do well by helping the person with dementia to build a systematic collection of personal memorabilia and information database.

The family caregiver can help the person to work out the content list and to start searching for the information, photos or other relevant items. It is best to have items representing different events and different time periods.

Before starting to work on the collection, the purpose and the process must be explained to the person. This would enhance his/her cooperation.

1. Photo albums (family and individual)
2. School records/birth certificate/personal identity card
3. Medals and awards
4. Work identity card/salary slip
5. Other relevant information such as paper clippings
6. A new album, notebook or folder may be used but be sure to leave spaces for writing



Below is an example for reference:

- a. Start off with the birthplace and date of birth (for certain ethnic groups, the recording of dates according to the lunar calendar would be more relevant).
- b. Draw a family tree as far as the person can recall.
- c. Include a photo of the village, town or city where the person was born as well as the name of the hospital or place where the delivery took place.
- d. Schooling could be an interesting topic for the person as it is quite an important part of one's life. Medals or prizes won must be recorded down.
- e. Work History record the first job and the amount of the first salary; nature of job; position or work title; frequency of job change.
- f. Marriage wedding photos (including those taken during the honeymoon) are powerful reminders of what was it like during his/her wedding).
- g. Holiday photos select some memorable holiday photos and write the name of country, date and purpose of visit together with their contact numbers.
- h. Photo of Friends old photos bring back good memories of the person's friends. It would be useful to indicate the name of the friend, where they first met, and where they are now together with their contact numbers.
- i. Photos of relative select a few old as well as new photos taken at different years to serve as reminders of how the relatives look like over the years.
- j. Any interesting story is worthy to be recalled and recorded.

2. Supporting the Activity of Daily Living (ADL) Skills

ADL skills refer to washing, bathing, feeding, toileting and mobility. These are essential basic skills to maintain personal hygiene and meet the daily needs. As the disease progresses into moderate or advanced stage, the intellectual capability of the person with dementia may deteriorate to a level that requires assistance to maintain personal hygiene.

Mild Stage: During the early stage, the person must be encouraged to remain independent and take care of their own personal hygiene. The family caregivers may only need to remind or assist them (such as squeezing the toothpaste out, telling them where the things are kept or preparing a bath for them and or getting clean clothing's to them). It is often helpful to put up procedural charts with color pictures in the appropriate room. For example: steps in brushing teeth or shaving.

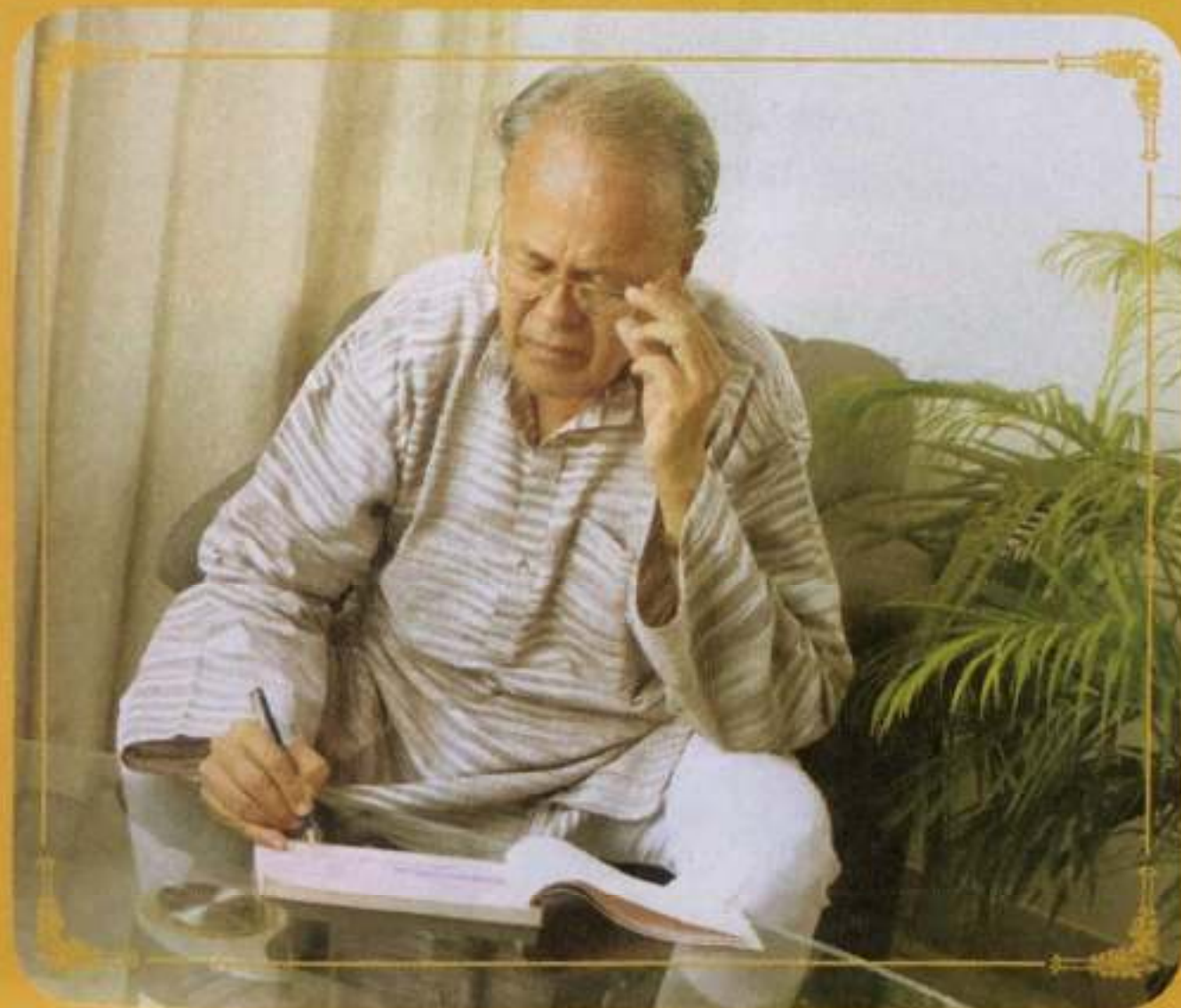
In the morning, the family caregivers should encourage the person to brush the teeth and to wash the face independently. Using electric razor instead of manual razor would encourage him to do the shaving by himself. Any missing step must be noted down and reminded gently if necessary. The family caregivers would notice that as time goes by the person may not be able to complete the full procedure for a simple task such as brushing teeth or shaving during the moderate or advanced stage of dementia.



When choosing what to wear, the family caregiver must avoid taking too many clothes for the person to select. The family caregiver must create a simple procedure for the person to follow. For example, to take out two appropriate outfits and lay them out on top of the bed, and encourage the person to choose. Orienting the person about the weather before choosing the outfit for going out would prevent arguments.

Moderate Stage: The person requires more help to meet daily needs. Therefore, the family caregivers must prepare by starting off the task and let the person complete the last few steps. Another good way is to do the task together by showing or guiding them step by step.

Advanced Stage: During the end stage of disease, there is total disorientation to time, place and person. The family caregiver needs to provide all the care including personal hygiene, feeding and toileting. People with advanced stage of dementia would have lost the initiative, motivation or capability to attend to their needs. Therefore, a longer caregiving time is needed to meet these needs.



The following is a list of tips for enhancing the relationship with the elderly person with dementia during the caregiving process.

GO

Explain what you are going to do and ask if he/she agrees.
Nodding head means the person understood
and agrees to participate

Give him/her plenty of time to complete the task especially
when it early in the morning or in the evening.

Start off the task for him/her so that
the person can follow

Explain what you are doing throughout the
process in a clear gentle voice

Smile while watching him/her
to carry out the task

Give praise all the way using positive comments to
encourage him/her to complete the task



STOP

Don't do it if there is not sufficient time

Don't just tell the person with dementia the name of the task without giving some simple instruction or clarification

Don't leave the person to do a task alone for a long time as he/she would cease to continue if there is nobody there to watch or keep an eye on. Go back to him/her every few minutes and make sure it is in progress.

Don't make negative comments or show your annoyance as the care recipient could sense both verbal and non-verbal hostility.

Don't shout or raise your voice if the person makes a mess or does not complete the task.



a. Taking medications :

A medications storage and dispensing box with the 7 days of the week (Monday to Sunday) printed on each of the smaller boxes is highly recommended. Each of the smaller boxes is highly recommended. Each of the smaller boxes have compartments which indicate the time, the medications should be taken for that day. The medications for a particular day (say for example Tuesday) are to be placed inside the box labeled for that day (Tuesday). Furthermore, the medications are to be placed in the appropriate compartment, which indicates the time the medications should be taken. It might be helpful to prepare the medications on a weekly basis and only take out the smaller box each morning for the medications of the day. Place the small box on the table so that person with dementia can see and take the medications. The family caregiver should check the drug box daily whether the person with dementia has taken the pills.



Seven Day's Drug Box (suitable for the elderly person with dementia who needs to take medications several times a day)

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Mor.							
Aft.							
Evn.							

- The name of the elderly person with dementia is shown on the drug box
- Prepare a list of medications and their use.
- Clearly label the daily drug box (with day and time for medications)
- Following the label, the elderly person can easily take out the drug by sliding the cover.
- Write the name of the elderly person with dementia and the prescription on the box

b. Shopping :

A person with dementia should not stop shopping because of the disease, but personal escort is necessary. People with dementia would need to maintain a regular social stimulation and reality orientation by going out to shop as often as possible. Hence the family caregiver must help the person prepare a shopping list before the person prepares a shopping list before the person with dementia goes to the shop.

- The shopping list must be short and simple, because people with dementia must not carry a large amount of money especially large bank notes. They could easily lose their wallets or may not know how to work out the change.
- Let the person bring small bank notes and if possible, the exact amount of money.
- Before leaving home, the family caregiver must repeat the list with person by going through the items.
- Go to a regular shop where the owner or manager knows the person by name.
 - First, he/she would be treated well
 - Second, the shop owner or manager would take time to serve him/her.
 - Third, the person with dementia will be familiar with the environment and the shop owner or manager.
 - Lastly, the shop owner or manager would not cheat on the person and the correct change would be given.

- Upon returning home, the family caregiver must go through the items with the person to check if everything was done correctly. The family caregiver should not be too harsh if the person missed anything or brought the wrong item. The most important thing is that person has completed the shopping trip and returned safely with the items.
- Counting the correct items instead of focusing on the mistakes would be the right approach to reduce the conflicts. The person will also be more willing to go again next time.
- If the shopping has led to an unpleasant experience, the person will be reluctant to do again and the family caregiver will probably stop giving the task to him/her in the future. Consequently, the person with dementia will lose the shopping skills and the social interaction with outside world. It would only lead to increased dependency on the family caregiver and add to the caregiving burden.



c. Use of telephone :

Losing the skill to dial telephone numbers would put the person with dementia more at risk as he/she could not call for help. And if living alone, she/he will be totally cut off from the social world. Buying a telephone with big press buttons and numbers will be a big help. Follow this up by writing a name list (with big characters) of important people such as spouse, children or close friends with their numbers on a piece of paper.

Training or teaching the person with dementia to use the mobile phone is not easy because it is too small in size and the print could be too small to read. However, the family caregiver still needs to teach the person with dementia how to use the mobile phone, so that the person can be reached whenever he/she goes.

Write down simple instructions step by step with picture guide. Next, demonstrate how to do it in front of the person. Set up a training schedule for daily practice to use the mobile phone. After several demonstrations and practice sessions, the person with dementia is encouraged to make a phone call by himself/herself. Due to memory deficits, the person with dementia will probably be able to recall only one or two contact numbers, so the training should only be limited to such. Other important numbers should be written in the list mentioned above.

d. Money management :

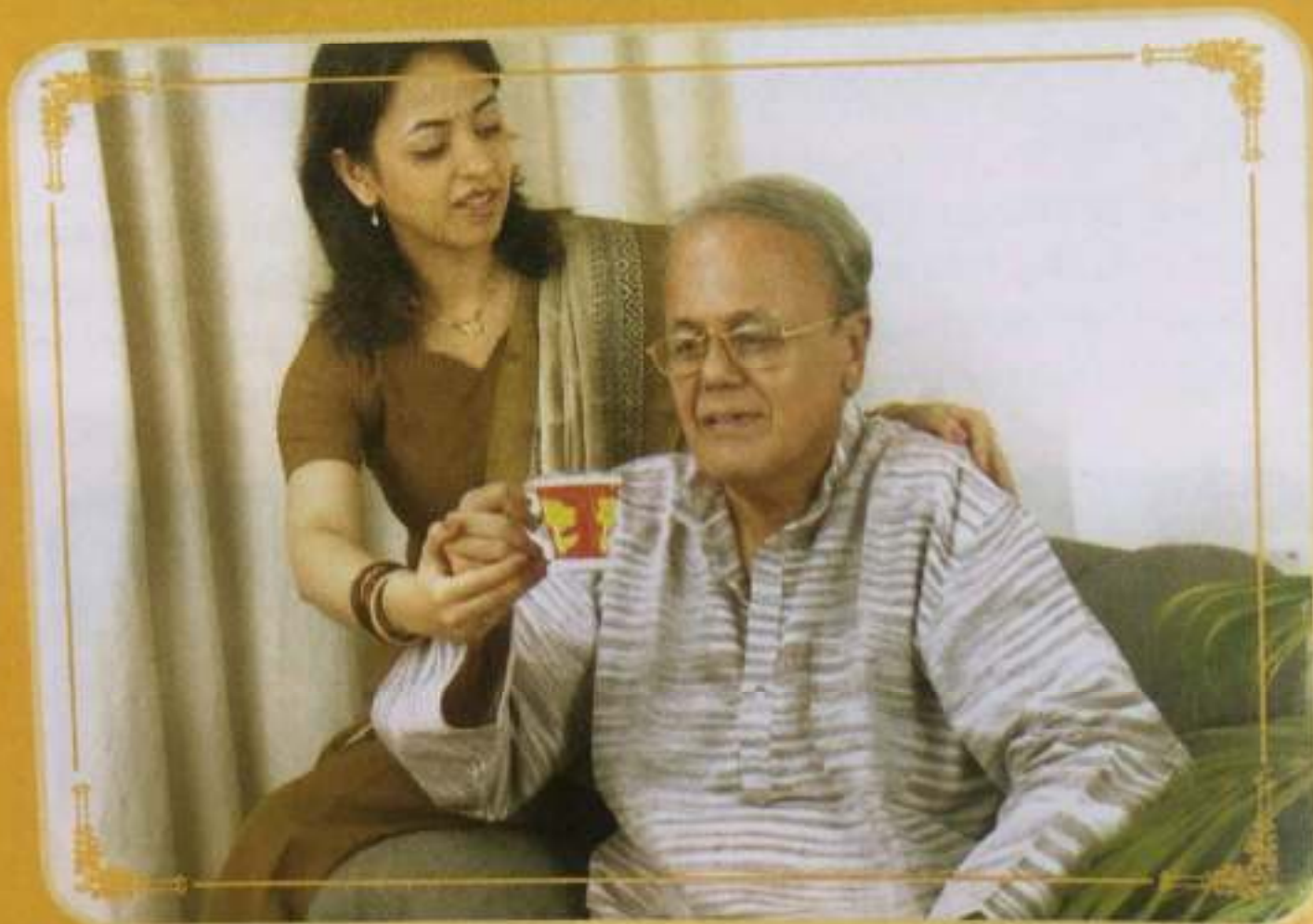
Person with dementia would have difficulty in calculation and thus handling money becomes a challenge to them.

- The family caregiver can show the bank notes and coins to the person with dementia and encourage him/her to tell what is the value of each. If the person can only recognize certain bank notes or coins, the family caregiver must not give out too much money. Hence, the outcome of such kind of assessments may be used to determine how much money the person with dementia can handle.
- The family caregiver must practice with the person several times at home to familiarize the person with money again.
- It is wise to prepare a log book to record how much is given out each day to the person with dementia. Ask the person to sign on the log book if he/she agrees to do so. It is one way to prove how much has been given to him/her. If the person disputes what was written on the record, the family caregiver should try to establish a mutual agreement so as to avoid a conflict at the end of the day.
- Try to develop a habit of asking how the money given to him/her for that day was spent. Gently ask what he/she has bought and how much each item costs. In this way, the family caregiver can check whether the person has spent the money or lost it.



STOP (Again the family caregiver must not)

- Give large amount of money with different denominations
- Give the bank pass book as it might get lost easily
- Send them to the bank to withdraw cash
- Shout at or blame the person with dementia when the money is mishandled or lost as it might lead to an unnecessary argument or a fight. People with dementia would deny and or would not like to be told off when they could not recall how they lost or spent the money. They may even deny that they have the money. Therefore, it is important that the family caregiver be careful when allowing the person with dementia to carry cash.
- Expect the person with dementia to lose money or wallet every now and then, as it is a common occurrence. This will help the fair caregiver not to feel too annoyed and unhappy when small amount of money is lost.



GO (Other helpful tips)

- Assess the intellectual ability in handling money
- Constant observation is necessary because the person with dementia is expected to deteriorate over time. Gradually cut down the amount of money to be given out each day according to the person's ability to handle the money.
- Prepare to take over the overall financial management in future. It is wise to obtain legal services if the person with dementia has personal accounts, property or other assets
- Give praise if he/she looks after the money well.
- Accompany the person when he/she wants to buy things and observe how he/she pays for the bill.
- Respect his/her dignity and self esteem by encouraging him/her to had money but in small amount



3. Psychological support

During the early stage, the person with dementia, though suffering from cognitive impairment, is usually aware of his/her own deficits. He/she would develop different ways of coping with gradual loss of memory and self care abilities.

a. Self-respect

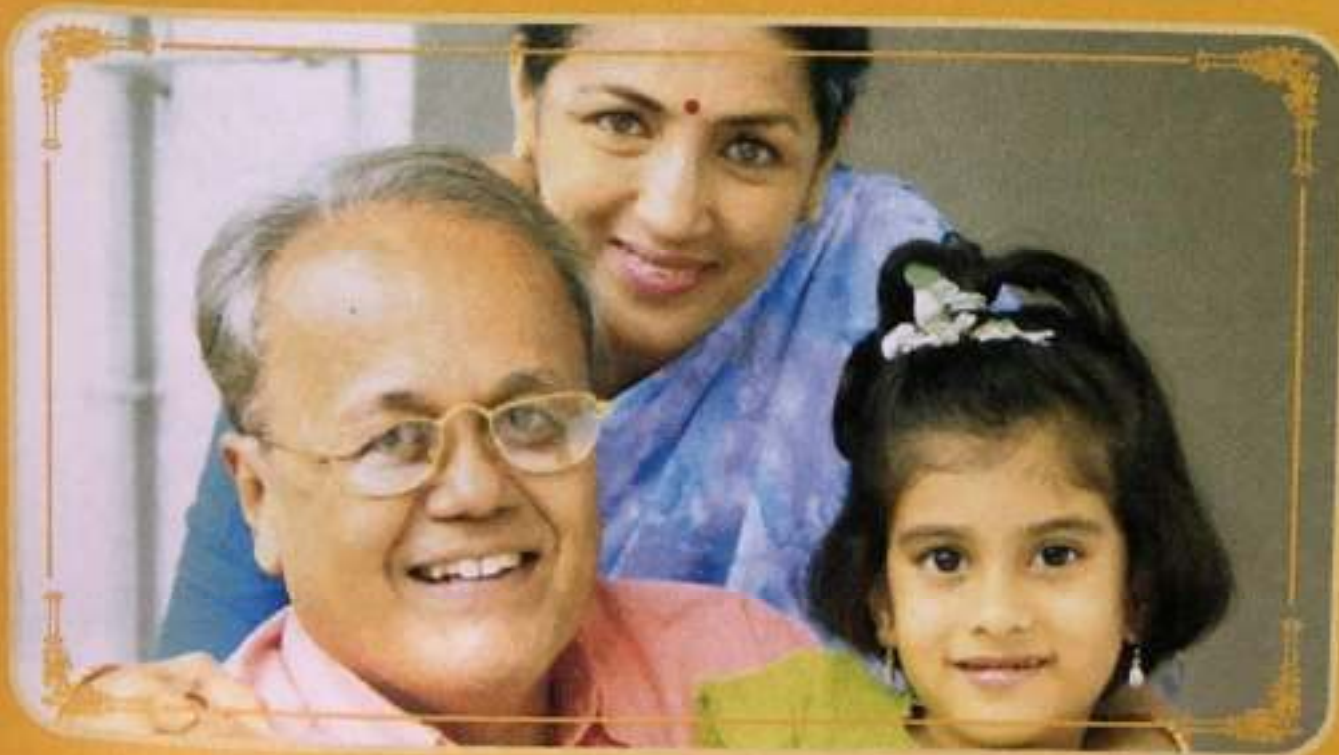
Most elderly people would admit that they have poor memory and attribute it to the ageing process. Because of this, they might develop low self-esteem, which leads to social withdrawal. In addition, family caregivers tend to comment on the person's cognitive impairment in front of them to the professional staff at the out patient clinic or to their relatives/friends.



Support & Help

GO

- Be reminded that the person is suffering from neurological changes and empathize with him/her. Be constantly aware that they need more respect than ever.
- Allow the person to make mistakes or to forget things due to the nature of disease.
- At the outpatient clinic, it would be ideal for the family member to request for a separate interview so that the person would not feel too embarrassed when the family caregiver gives a full account of their real situation.
- Try to focus the things he/she can still perform.
- When other members of the family or friends who are not knowledgeable about dementia, comments on the person's memory loss, it is best for the family caregiver to bring them aside and take the opportunity to explain about how dementia affects memory. Or, when the person is not present, the family caregiver may try to inform their family members, friends, relatives or neighbours about the person's condition so that they can handle the situation.
- Give praises when he/she has successfully completed a task.
- Reassure him/her with comforting words when thing goes wrong.
- Acknowledge he/she is coping well.



STOP

- Avoid giving negative comments or criticizing the person's memory deficits.
- When giving information to any healthcare professional, the family member must not be too harsh to focus on only the wrong things done by the person.

*The person with low self-esteem needs reassurance and warm affection. The caregiver could involve other family members or friends/relatives with caregiving role so as to enhance family members' or friends/relatives' understanding of the disease and needs. In this way, the person with dementia will receive more affections from other family members/friends or relatives.

b. Self-confidence

Similar with self-esteem, many people with dementia may lose their confidence in handling day to day situations and in facing the challenges of the outside world. They would prefer to stay at home and let their family caregivers make decision for them. At the early stage, most of the people with dementia still have insights into their own problems and thus they start depending on their family caregivers for advice and help.

Support & Help

- Encourage people with dementia to continue their daily routine as much as their abilities allow them to do so.
 - Assess the degree to which he/she could complete a given task at home as well as the ability to take care of himself/herself when they go out alone.
 - Accompany the person when going out but encourage him/her to take the lead to find the right direction and reach the desired destination.
 - Practice by going through the route with the person and or by drawing up a map (with detailed landmarks and street names) if the person is still able to read a simple diagrams.
 - Observe the person's orientation to the surrounding and how he/she copes with external stress such as crossing roads with external stress such as crossing roads with traffic signs and walking in a crowd.
 - Be sure to accompany the person when he/she is visiting a new place so that the person would not feel lost. This will make the person confident to try visiting different new places.
- * Rebuilding or maintaining the self-confidence requires constant support and assistance from family members. The person starts losing confidence when he/she makes repeated mistake/errors or when there is a lack of support. Once self-confidence is lost, the person quickly gives up trying and starts using avoidance or denial as their coping mechanisms

c. Manage anxiety

Persons with dementia may also suffer from anxiety especially during the early stage of the disease. They are aware of their cognitive impairment but cannot control the gradual loss of their memory over time. They may become anxious and do not know what to do.

Support & Help

- The family caregiver must seek professional help if person with dementia becomes too anxious that it interferes with the daily routine. The anxiety state may also eventually affect the person's thoughts, feelings and ability to cope. This increases the caregiving burden tremendously and is devastating to the person.
- Finding out the factors that trigger anxiety may be difficult but if identified and prevented, may be of great help to both the person and the caregiver. When the person is anxious, he needs the support and reassurance from their family members. Just having somebody to talk to or to share their feelings with, will go a long way in calming down the anxiety.

*If the anxiety interferes with activities of daily life, the family caregivers must seek professional help so that early intervention can be given to the person with dementia.

d. Manage agitation

Person with dementia could become very restless at times. They start to pace up and down and do not know what to do. The agitation could be because they are afraid of what is going to happen to them. Or, it could be because they are staying in or entering into a new environment. Agitation may be a part of depression, anger or anxiety.

Support & Help

- Help the person with dementia accept that he/she has the disease and give support as he/she makes adjustments to cope with the difficulties.
- As much as possible, allow the person to move freely in a safe environment but there is a need to protect them from any injury when they become very restless.
- When the person starts to calm down or to sit down, it would be good for the caregiver to explain to them why they are feeling agitated and how they could help themselves by doing something they enjoy and find meaningful.
- Establish a routine for the person by writing down the daily schedule on the notice board or on a large piece of paper so that he/she could see the whole day's schedule and help to reduce the agitation.
- Give plenty of fluids and provide good ventilation so that the person does not feel too hot or dehydrated. Finding an interesting task for the person to do or engage in may divert the person's attention to other things and prevent agitation. For example, if the person with dementia enjoys art work or music, family caregiver may prepare some art work or play soft music. Then invite them to participate in the activity.
- * Similar to anxiety, the person with dementia who is agitated needs verbal or non verbal reassurance to calm them down.

e. Manage mood change

Many people with dementia will have low moods anytime during the course of their illness. They lose their zest in life. They prefer sitting down and doing nothing at home. Some avoid talking about their memory problems and instead try to hide away their short-term memory deficits. They might become very sensitive when people notice their frequent forgetful behavior and find different excuses to cover up their internal cognitive problems.

Support & Help

GO

- The person needs constant support when going into a new environment or place. The family caregiver must keep a close observation towards his reaction and behavior.
- Psychological preparation is important because the person requires sufficient time to understand the surrounding and respond to requests or instructions.
- Try to prepare the person by giving cues and giving simple instructions. Turning on the lights in the bathroom, hanging the clothes and towel inside the bathroom and gently telling the person that bath is ready and holding the hand to guide him/her to the bathroom could help prepare the person to take a bath. If the person shows some resistance, then wait for the negative reaction to subside and then try again when the person with dementia starts feeling calm and forgets what had happened a few minutes ago. This approach often works because it is done in a gentle and non-threatening way.
- Learn to sense the mood of the person with dementia. Try to spot signs of withdrawal, loss of interest in things that they are used to enjoy as well as other behavioral changes such as becoming verbally aggressive towards other people, etc.

STOP

Do not rush or push the person to do things (such as bathing, eating etc) quickly without adequately preparing the person. Try to guide them step by step if he/she seems to forget what to do or how to do it.

* Family caregivers must observe closely for signs of mood swings and learn to handle the person with care. A person with dementia could easily get upset since he/she lacks the ability to understand the external demand and have difficulties in coping with stress.

4. Social support

Everybody needs to maintain a close contact with the social world. It can be done through going out to various places and or meeting with different people. The person would choose to avoid going out to meet with friends or to visit new places in order to prevent making mistakes and because he/she would not know how to respond appropriately.

a. Keeping contact with old friends

When the person with dementia retires, he/she would start losing the old social network. Once this contact stops, valuable information from long-term memory (such as friend's names, memorable events, etc) is lost with increasing speed. It is best to help and encourage the person to keep contacts with old friends.

Support & Help

Help the person keep regular contacts with old friends such as encouraging him/her to call former colleagues or friends

Organize social gatherings such as tea parties once a month, etc.

Accompany the person to visit old friends living nearby.

Encourage and assist the person to send birthday cards, Christmas cards, postcards, letters, etc. to their friends

b. Going out to shops or restaurants

Going shopping or eating out provide chances for social interaction. The person should be given the opportunity to interact with others in a normal environment, so that he/she would not lose social skills such as greeting, smiling and reacting to other people's conversation etc.

Support & Help

- Take the person to familiar shops or restaurants regularly to make him/her feel at ease
- When visiting a new place, prepare the person well by introducing the name of the shop, location, some interesting descriptions as well as explaining the purpose of the visit. Not knowing what to do will only create confusion, disorientation and even anxiety.
- Avoid going to over-crowded places or shops because the person with dementia may feel out of control or anxious when seeing so many people or things on display.



c. Visiting museums

Support & Help

- It also offers an excellent environment for the person to walk around freely and still be able to see the good old things. The person may need the caregiver to explain the items in the museum slowly and clearly so advance preparation will be helpful. Getting familiar with what are on display, how many floors there are in the museum, availability of lifts, operating hours, special rates for senior citizens and the appropriate time to go to avoid crowds, could go a long way in making the visit a more pleasant and stress free experience.

d. Visiting the park

The park can provide multi-sensory stimulation for the person with dementia. The sense of sight (of flowers, trees, plants and people), touch (of plants, tree trunk and [pet animals), sounds (of chirping birds, laughter), smell (of fragrant flowers and fresh air), the taste of delightful ice cream and the sensation of warm sunshine or gentle breeze on the person's face could sooth the person's feelings and energize him/her.

Support and Help:

- Take special time out to bring the person to the nearby parks or even to bigger national parks. Encourage the person to practice using the five senses mentioned above. Encourage the person to name the flowers, and the different plants and chat about the gardening if he/she is familiar with it.

* Regular social outing to different places can help maintain the social capabilities of the person with dementia. Frequently mingling and interacting with others can give him/her a semblance of a healthy normal social life.

5. Reality orientation :

The aim of reality orientation (RO) is to help the person with dementia maintain a sense of what is actually going on around him/her. This is not meant to reverse or treat the condition but to provide appropriate aids so that the person will continue to function and respond accordingly.

The application of RO should not only be limited during daytime or to certain hours of the day because the person with dementia is constantly forgetful and mental confusion is quite common during evenings.



Helpful tips when using RO in home setting

a. Prepare a white board

Put up a white board in a visible and frequently accessed location. Write down daily schedules and appointments clearly so that the person can refer to the written information and be properly oriented.

The use of the White board will be of help especially during the early stages. So, early training to teach the person to use the white board will likely reduce caregiving burden.

The size of the white board will depend on how much information needs to be written on it. As a rule of thumb, use simple words and big characters to facilitate reading and comprehension.

Support and Help:

Use black or blue ink pens for different items (e.g. Black for medications and blue for appointments, etc).

Colored magnets may be used to represent particular events or tasks.

▼
Avoid writing long sentences, use simple words instead.

▼
Test out whether the person understands what is written. Encourage him/her to read aloud and explain the meaning.

After several rehearsals, the person will usually be able to remember and refer to the board for the information required.

▼
Encourage the person to write the schedule himself/herself as it is easier to understand one's own handwriting.

b. Using the calendar

The calendar often has spaces to note down special events such as birthdays, festivals and medical appointments etc.

c. Using big clocks

Since person with dementia also needs to know the time, use a big clock with clear bold numbers as well as prominent hour and minute hands. It is better to include second hand because the second hand moves all the time.

Support and Help:

Choose a clock that displays Arabic (1,2,3,4) numbers.
(Note: Roman numbers are difficult to read, example: VII means 7) and have both long and short hands.



The numbers must be big enough to read clearly



Hang the clock in a place where it can be seen clearly and has sufficient lighting.



Spend some time every now and then to practice with the person in telling the correct time



Ensure that the person's vision is still fine.

d. Labeling the rooms

The person with dementia generally has some degree of confusion with the environment. He/she might go to the wrong bedroom or have difficulty in locating the bathroom (especially at night).

Support and Help:

Mount the photograph with the corresponding name on the bedroom door for easy identifications of the proper occupant of the room.

To identify the toilet/bathroom place a picture of a toilet bowl or a bathtub on the door, and for kitchen, use a picture of the stove or oven.

To prevent the person walks out of the house by opening the front door, the color of the front door should be matched with the wall paper or wall paint or using a light curtain to cover up the door so as to prevent the person keeps opening it.

To go through the name and each room with the person every day till he is able to identify where is the bathroom or his own bedroom or kitchen.

e. Read newspapers Daily

Reading newspapers daily would help the person keeps in touch with the recent local and international events.

Support and Help:

Encourage the person to buy the newspaper everyday

Read the newspaper together with the person

Ask him/her to tell you what he/she has just read

Discuss with the person about headline stories or other articles that the person find interesting

Choose good news rather than the bad news as it would stimulate good conversations.

Ask the person to give his/her opinion about the news. Avoid being judgmental regarding his/her comments or opinions instead use them as valuable tools to assess the level of understanding of the whole story as well as the reasoning capabilities.

f. Visiting the local shops or going out

Try to orient the person about the latest goods or products available in the local shops to let them be aware of what is happening in the real world.

Support and Intervention:

Visit the local department stores or shops
during off- peak hours

Use the escalators so that the person could
have a wider view of the place.

Avoid places where breakable items
are displayed

Encourage him/her to touch or handle the
product but watch carefully to prevent
it from dropping to the floor

Watch the reaction when he/she sees
and handles different items to know what
interests him/her.

Conclusion

The reality orientation exercises should be conducted both during daytime as well as night time. Make use of the environmental cues to keep the person with dementia in touch with reality.

The caregiver should have a correct perspective of RO. Although RO is quite helpful, it does not stop the progression of cognitive decline especially with regard to long term memory loss.

6. Guide for a trip :

Planning a trip with someone who has dementia? Here are some suggestions:

Consider the person's stage of dementia. Trust your judgment and experience. Try to gear your expectations and plans to your family member's skills. Plan ahead, anticipating delays, changes in schedules, weather, and your family member's needs.

Consider any physical impairments that might affect travel. How far can your family member walk? If visually impaired, you will need to provide your arm as a guide or escort. If your family member is hearing impaired, be sure their hearing aid is turned on to an appropriate volume and bring extra batteries.

Keep your plans simple. Avoid fast paced schedules. The fewer the changes, the less likely your family member will become agitated.

Bathrooms. Schedule extra bathroom stops and consider protective briefs. Enlist the help of a friend or family member (who is the same sex as the person with AD) to accompany you bus station/ railway station to assist with bathroom needs.

Pack lightly. It will be important for you to have a hand free to escort your family member. If you have packages or need several suitcases, consider shipping them in advance.

Consider travel time. How long can the individual sit in one place? Does your family member need to roam? Does your family member function better at certain times of the day?



- Never send the patient alone or on a bus with multiple stops
- Schedule plenty of breaks and time out for snacks. Try to maintain meal times.
- Bring along familiar activities. Pack a few magazines, a deck of cards, a wallet or purse to rummage through, or other activities that your family member enjoys at home. This will help to distract them from the change in environment and help to calm them by providing familiar events.
- Carry emergency contacts and phone number with you and on your family member.