

Helpful Attitudes

to help you provide better care for people with Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and dementia

People with AD are individuals

- AD develops differently in different people. One care plan cannot serve all people with AD.
- Take an interest in each individual
- Knowing people's likes and dislikes helps you manage their behavior
- Be an expert on the people you care for

Work with the symptoms or behaviors you see

- People with AD show different symptoms day to day. Focus on the symptoms and behaviors you see, rather than on the disease
- Notice change in behavior, mood, and independence and report your observations

Be understanding and compassionate

- AD is a devastating mental and physical disorder that affects everyone who surrounds and cares for the one with AD.
- Remember that people with AD do not always have control over their behavior. Don't take their behavior personally
- Think about the symptoms of AD in terms of your own life. How would you feel? How would you want to be treated?
- Assume that people with AD have insight and are aware of the changes in their abilities
- Provide security and comfort
- Provide opportunities for success and personal satisfaction

Alzheimer's Association
24-hour, toll-free Helpline
1-800-272-3900 statewide

Long Term Care Ombudsman
Program
1-800-815-0015

Wisconsin Guardianship Hotline
1-800-488-2596

Work as a team

- People with AD may not distinguish among aides, nurses, or administrators, so be prepared to help when needed.
- Share insights and observations with your team.
- Part of AD care is noticing changes in behavior, or physical and emotional health. Working as a team, more subtle changes will be noticed

Take care of yourself

- Acknowledge that caring for someone with dementia can be emotionally and physically demanding
- Be good to yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually
- Be aware of your body's signals to slow down, rest, or eat better
- Remember that your feelings are real and you have a right to them
- Share your feelings with others, especially those experiencing similar situations
- Use any mistakes as learning experiences

Work with family members

- Family may know things you would have to learn by trial and error.
- Family members can be of great comfort to dementia victims, helping you provide excellent care.
- Suggest environmental changes or modifications as appropriate to the person with AD

Always remember the care program goals

- Providing security and comfort
- Maintaining dignity and self-esteem
- Promoting independence
- Providing assistance with appropriate care and interventions during each stage of the illness