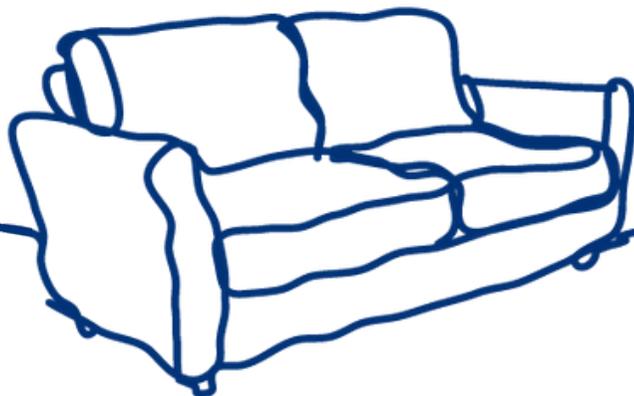


Dementia Carers Toolkit

If you are looking after a vulnerable person who is suffering with dementia, you are a carer - even if you do not see yourself as one.

Being a carer is a unique and challenging situation, in which negative feelings like anger, guilt, isolation or a mental health issue like anxiety or depression can grow.

Recognising yourself as a carer and acknowledging the difference that you make can be the gateway to getting a range of help and support.



Solent

...this short guide will give you some tips if you are caring for someone with dementia.

Extra Support

Discuss and arrange Lasting Power of Attorney, which will allow you to make important decisions if someone you care for lacks capacity.

Get a Carer's Assessment from your local city or county council, who may be able to support you with finances, accommodation, transport and more.

Find a local carers network or support meeting. Sharing with other carers can help you process difficult feelings and feel less alone.

Develop a Crisis Support Plan which details who can step in to help if you are unable to cope alone.

Be honest about how you are feeling and let your loved ones support you. Even carers need care!

Looking after yourself

It is important to make your own health a priority so that you can continue to provide care to someone else.

Ask for and accept help:

People often want to help but don't know where to start, so be specific.

Try...

'I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed, would you mind stopping by on Tuesday to do a puzzle with my Dad while I go for a run?'

Get emotional support:

Reach out to family & friends, or seek help from professionals if needed.

Try...

Your local Carers Centre can give you access to community resources and even help you source respite care.

Take time for yourself:

Do something that you enjoy, or simply rest & recharge.

Try...

Try to schedule time to go on a walk a couple of times a week. This will give you time to think, reflect or recharge.

Understanding Dementia

Caring for someone with complex needs doesn't come naturally, so it's completely normal to feel defeated when a day doesn't go to plan.

When you feel frustrated, take some time to reflect and see if there might be another way to tackle a situation.

- Look past the dementia and see the person.
- Try to be patient and flexible. If they are distressed about something, try to distract them by changing conversation.
- Use empathy. Put yourself in their shoes and try to understand their needs.
- Remember they are not deliberately difficult and their condition may affect their sense of reality.
- Try to avoid correcting or contradicting them as this may cause more frustration.
- Help them to feel safe and secure while helping to make the most of their strengths and abilities.

Communication Tips

Make sure you have the person's full attention (consider noise, distractions)

Use body language (gestures, touch, facial expressions)

Use your sense of humour (laugh together to ease tension)

Make eye contact

Speak clearly and slowly (short sentences, simple language)

Stick to one topic at time

