

# Ten Activity Reminders When Caring For a Person With Alzheimer's

Successful activities for those with Alzheimer's support a person's sense of self and dignity—bringing out his/her skills, memories and habits—while minimizing skills that may be compromised due to the disease. Activities can also reduce behavior like wandering, agitation, anger, frustration, depression, or rummaging. When planning and participating in activities for a person with Alzheimer's, keep in mind the following:

- Activities need to be appropriate for the individual, keeping abilities and limitations in mind.
- Be mindful of the time of day, as most people with Alzheimer's react very differently in the evening, as compared to the morning.
- Keep the focus of the activity on the enjoyment of it: it is the experience of the activity that is important, not the end result.
- Do not correct or criticize. The purpose is to create enjoyment!
- Offer support as needed and provide simple instructions one task at a time.
- Stress a sense of purpose in the activity such as saying you'd like to send a special thank-you card to someone and then invite the person to join you.
- Involve the person through conversation. Even if the person doesn't respond, he or she is likely to benefit from your communication.
- Substitute an activity for a behavior. If a person with dementia rubs his hand on a table, put a cloth in his hand and encourage him to wipe the table. Or, if he is moving his feet on the floor, play some music so he can tap them to the beat.
- If something isn't working, it may just be the wrong time of day or the activity may be too complicated. Try again later, or adapt the activity.
- Encourage activities that can make the person feel like a valued member of the household such as setting the table or sweeping the floor.

At **Visiting Angels**, we believe that scheduling appropriate daily enrichment activities can improve the wellbeing of a person with Alzheimer's as well as create a sense of belonging, a sense of self, and a sense of mastery. Contact us today to learn more about our specialized Alzheimer's and dementia care.



Sources: Alzheimer's Association, Yahoo Voices



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