

LIVING WITH DEMENTIA



- 1. Before assuming that someone has some type of permanent dementia, rule out the many other things that may be causing similar symptoms:**
 - a. Urinary Tract or other infections;**
 - b. Medications;**
 - c. Dehydration;**
 - d. Depression;**
 - e. Hearing Loss;**
 - f. Vitamin B-12 Deficiency**
 - g. Residual Effects of an Anesthesia**
- 2. Recognize that all people, regardless of cognitive functioning, have a need to feel they matter. They determine this in the way you treat them.**
- 3. People of any age and cognitive functioning can continue to grow and learn new functional and alternative strategies.**
- 4. People with dementia are just like everyone else, inside. They simply may be unable to process incoming information or formulate outgoing information efficiently.**
- 5. Behavioral issues are ALWAYS the result of A NEED the person has. The strategy for dealing with it is to identify the need and figure out a way to satisfy it.**
- 6. Everyone with dementia has their own unique pattern of abilities and disabilities that may change from day to day based on how well they slept, how good they feel, the people around them, how well they are hydrated and have eaten, and other factors.**

- 7. It is important to identify each person's strengths and abilities and use those to help them overcome or cope with the areas in which they are having trouble.**
- 8. Most people with dementia do not "Wander," they are, in fact, trying to go somewhere. It is important to figure what they are needing and then find a way to provide it. Once they have been helped to get into a new routine, most people with dementia do not "Wander."**
- 9. Locking up elders in a dementia unit is often a risky strategy. They do much better when they are around people without impairments. The modeling helps them retain skills by watching others.**
- 10. Most medications are not a good strategy for treating behavior issues in people with dementia. They simply dumb the person down and mask the need behind the behavior, instead of figuring it out and meeting the elder's needs.**