



The Gathering Place Newsletter

Issue 60

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Mission Statement::

The Gathering Place at Lakewood UMC is a ministry for those who are living with memory loss and the people who love them.



"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" – Matthew 25:40



Activities

A person with Alzheimer's or other dementia doesn't have to give up the activities that he or she loves. Many activities can be modified to the person's ability. In addition to enhancing quality of life, activities can reduce behaviors like wandering or agitation.

Your approach

If you notice a person's attention span waning or frustration level increasing, it's likely time to end or modify the activity.

Help get the activity started. Most people with dementia still have the energy and desire to do things but may lack the ability to organize, plan, initiate and successfully complete the task.

Offer support and supervision. You may need to show the person how to perform the activity and provide simple, easy-to-follow steps.

Concentrate on the process, not the result. Does it matter if the towels are folded properly? Not really. What matters is that you were able to spend time together, and that the person feels as if he or she has done something useful.

Be flexible. When the person insists that he or she doesn't want to do something, it may be because he or she can't do it or fears doing it. Don't force it. If the person insists on doing it a different way, let it happen, and change it later if necessary.

Assist with difficult parts of the task. If you're cooking, and the person can't measure the ingredients, finish the measuring and say, "Would you please stir this for me?"

Let the individual know he or she is needed. Ask, "Could you please help me?" Be careful, however, not to place too many demands upon the person.

Stress a sense of purpose. If you ask the person to make a card, he or she may not respond. But, if you say that you're sending a special get-well card to a friend and invite him or her to join you, the person may enjoy working on this task with you.

Don't criticize or correct the person. If the person enjoys a harmless activity, even if it seems insignificant or meaningless to you, encourage the person to continue.

Encourage self-expression. Include activities that allow the person a chance for expression. These types of activities could include painting, drawing, music or conversation.

Involve the person through conversation. While you're polishing shoes, washing the car or cooking dinner, talk to the person about what you're doing. Even if the person cannot respond, he or she is likely to benefit from your communication.

Substitute an activity for a behavior. If a person with dementia rubs his or her hand on a table, provide a cloth and encourage the person to wipe the table. Or, if the person is moving his or her feet on the floor, play some music so the person can tap to the beat.

Try again later. 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.



Common Ground Caregiver Conversations

Common Ground is a place and time for caregivers like you to meet, talk, share, learn and receive the support needed to take care of yourselves so you can provide the best care possible to a family member or friend.

Common Ground is a free caregiver assistance program of Interfaith CarePartners® in cooperation with partner congregations in greater Houston. Groups are available for caregivers of persons with dementia and caregivers for persons with other diagnoses and conditions.

Lakewood will be hosting Common Ground on May 8, 2017 from 10:15-11:30 am in the Parlor. For more information, contact Pam Cline at 281.370.2273 or pam.cline@lakewoodumc.org.

Want to see what goes on at the Gathering Place? Check out our website to see great pictures, VIP videos, previous newsletters and more.

Go to: <http://lakewoodgathering.org/>

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