

# ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER TIPS

## 1. COMMUNICATION:

- Make eye contact and call the person by name.
- Speak slowly, use short phrases, and offer one-step instructions, for instance, say "Let's set the table" or "I need help folding clothes".
- Avoid beginning sentences with the word "Remember...". It is ineffective and may cause feelings of failure or provoke an argument.
- Avoid asking "yes" or "no" questions. Suggest activities by saying, "It is time to..." rather than "do you want to...?"
- Use "Let's..." to encourage cooperation and participation. Let's go to the table for lunch.
- Avoid giving commands or directives.

## 2. BEHAVIOR CHANGES:

- Maintain a daily routine.
- Use distractions such as music, singing, or other activities to re-direct attention or address agitation.
- Ask for help from family, friends, or church groups to prevent care-giver burnout.
- Look for the early signs of agitation such as a raised voice, fidgeting, or repetitive behaviors.
- Offer reassurance, such as, "I am right here or "You are okay".
- Reduce noise, clutter, or the number of people in the room.
- Try soothing music, reading, or walks to promote a calm mood.
- Slow down and try to relax if you think your stress or fatigue may be affecting the person with AD.

## 3. SLEEP PROBLEMS

- Make sure the person gets exercise each day and limit daytime naps.
- Encourage daytime mental and physical activities, such as games, puzzles & socialization.
- Try to maintain a consistent bed time and calming bedtime rituals, such as soft music instead of TV.
- Plan activities that require more energy early in the day. For example, try bathing in the morning or serving the largest family meal in the middle of the day.
- Limit caffeine intake.

