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Care Partner Hacks

Not rocket science...not necessarily original to us...not all-encompassing...and ideas are in no particular order...but we hope some suggestions may make daily life a little easier.



Try SETTING OUT MEALS ahead of time with pills crushed in apple sauce or pudding if taking pills is a struggle or meal times feel rushed.

KEEP ENGAGING ACTIVITIES OUT and handy to access for yourself and others who come in to spend time with your loved person. Help get activity started rather than expecting your person to initiate.



ENLARGE A FEW OLD PICTURES (of growing up years, old hometown, school, favorite trips.) Enjoy them together with no quizzing. The beauty of dementia is that you will need fewer pictures as the need for simplicity increases. Start out with 1-5 pictures that bring joy, and learn to love repetition as you talk about the memories the pictures evoke. Take note of phrases used to tell stories.

Keep a list handy on your refrigerator so when looking for something of purpose for your loved one to do, you don't have to expend energy to think of something. The beauty of dementia is that what works can be repeated.

More assistance may be required as dementia progresses and expectations of outcomes need to change as care partners realize it is all about an enjoyable process, not the standard of work completed.



Dementia-Friendly Communities of Northern Colorado

Straighten out shoes
Sort mug shelf
Sort silverware drawer
Organize tools hanging above work bench
fold towels
empty garbage can
Sweep patio





Keep it simple. Don't expect your loved one to choose from many options. Narrow it down and RE-USE WHAT WORKS. Activity with purpose and interest is the key. What doesn't seem purposeful to you, might feel meaningful to your loved person depending on how you frame the activity. Set it up for success. Get it started and DO THE ACTIVITY TOGETHER. Then you may be able to fade out as your loved person is interested in continuing the activity on his/her own.

If your loved person tends to be cold, use a WARMED TOWEL around his/her shoulders BEFORE you start the bathing/showering process. So what if it gets wet? Warm an additional towel for the other half of the body and keep warm towels ready to use throughout the process. Pay attention to temperature of the bathroom, presence of mirrors which might feel like additional people in the room, and the words you use to refer to bathing/showering/cleaning up. Use your loved person's familiar words. Always make hygiene care something you do on the way to something better.



Try RINSELESS shampoo to shorten the time of needing to get your loved person's head wet.

Try using DRY SHAMPOO if getting your loved person's head wet is traumatic.





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As long as your loved one has no skin breakdown, try using non-menthol containing shaving foam for quicker clean-up of stool from the skin—Slightly warmed if your loved person is particularly sensitive to being cleaned up. PERINEAL SKIN CLEANSERS AND PROTECTORS are also available online for order to prevent skin breakdown and make clean-up easier.

Teeth cleaning LOLLIPOPS don't make up for careful oral care to prevent pain and infection, but they can help freshen up your loved person's mouth



Jelly drops HYDRATION BOOSTERS come in a box with 24 drops containing 300ml of water. Drops don't burst fluid making them easy to chew.



SHAVING can be easier using the shaving gel attached to the razor.

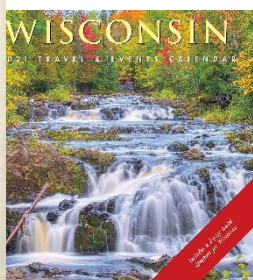
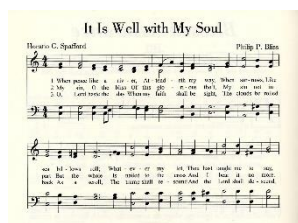
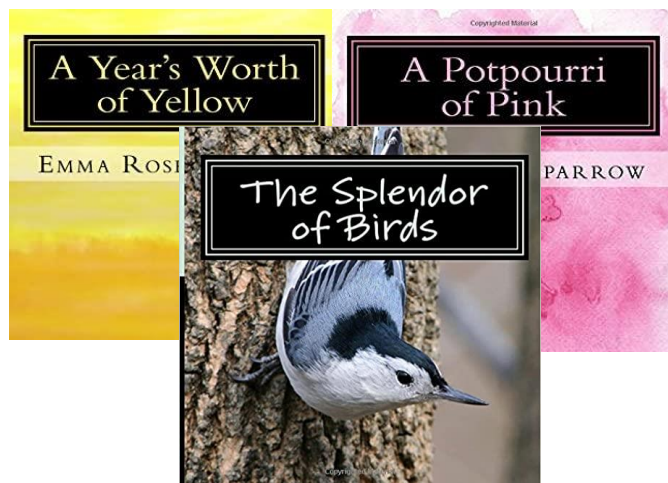
If you're tired of changing sheets, try Gorilla INCONTINENCE PADS which advertise to hold up to 8 cups of fluid. Other similar products are on the market.





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If your loved person enjoys books and is now overwhelmed with trying to follow a plot, but would be insulted by children's books, these books can bring back the joy of 'reading'. These BEAUTIFUL THEMED PICTURE BOOKS were designed for people living with dementia.



Use OLD CALENDARS OR GREETING CARD PICTURES to make a simple photograph album of meaningful places and beautiful scenes. If a lover of music, print lyrics or music of favorite songs to glue to the back of the picture. Play and sing favorite MUSIC together. If others are involved in care, ensure they know which songs create the most joy (along with other key information which needs to be shared in order to care well for your loved person. Contact us to learn what key information to share with anyone and everyone on your care team.)



Share instructional POCKET CARDS to increase awareness of dementia in your community and empower people to give you and your loved person excellent customer service.

<https://mariasplace.com/>
<https://www.alzstore.com/>
<https://www.carewell.com/>
<https://alzheimersspeaks.com/>



Disclaimer: We have not scientifically tested any products listed on this document nor do we specifically endorse one name brand or product over the next. Product pictures are only shown to give you an idea of what to look for if you are interested in the hack suggested by fellow care partners in our support group. As with anything you try, do your own research to evaluate for safety in your own loved person's particular situation before using.

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