10 ways to help a family living with Alzheimer’s

1. **Educate yourself about Alzheimer’s disease.**
   Learn about its effects and how to respond.

2. **Stay in touch.**
   A card, a call or a visit means a lot and shows you care.

3. **Be patient.**
   Adjusting to an Alzheimer’s diagnosis is an ongoing process and each person reacts differently.

4. **Offer a shoulder to lean on.**
   The disease can create stress for the entire family. Simply offering your support and friendship is helpful.

5. **Engage the person with dementia in conversation.**
   It’s important to involve the person in conversation even when his or her ability to participate becomes more limited.

6. **Offer assistance to help the family tackle its to-do list.**
   Prepare a meal, run an errand or provide a ride.

7. **Engage family members in activities.**
   Invite them to go on a walk or participate in other activities.

8. **Offer family members a reprieve.**
   Spend time with the person with dementia so family members can go out alone or visit with friends.

9. **Be flexible.**
   Don’t get frustrated if your offer for support is not accepted immediately. The family may need time to assess its needs.

10. **Get involved with the Alzheimer’s Association.**
    Show your support by becoming an advocate or participating in Walk to End Alzheimer’s® and The Longest Day®.
Understanding is the first step to helping.

People living in the early stage of Alzheimer’s would like you to know:

› I’m still the same person I was before my diagnosis.
› My independence is important to me; ask me what I’m still comfortable doing and what I may need help with.
› It’s important that I stay engaged. Invite me to do activities that we both enjoy.
› Don’t make assumptions about me because of my diagnosis. Alzheimer’s affects each person differently.
› Take time to ask me how I’m doing. I’m living with a disease, just like cancer or heart disease.
› I can still engage in meaningful conversation. Talk directly to me if you want to know how I am.
› Don’t pull away. It’s OK if you don’t know what to do or say. Your friendship and support are important to me.

Family members would like you to know:

› We need time to adjust to the diagnosis.
› We want to remain connected with others.
› We need time for ourselves.
› We appreciate the small gestures.

Join the fight against Alzheimer’s disease.

› Volunteer at your local Alzheimer’s Association.
› Participate in Walk to End Alzheimer’s and The Longest Day.
› Advocate for more research funding.
› Sign up for Alzheimer’s Association TrialMatch® to participate in clinical studies as a healthy volunteer.

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