



## Basic Principles For understanding and Caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease

### Treat the person with respect and dignity

1. Do not treat the person as if he/she were not there.
2. Do not joke about inappropriate speech or behaviour. Humor can be very good if used at an appropriate time.

### Simplify tasks

1. Break down each task and activity into easy steps.
2. Limit choices.
3. Allow time for slower processing of messages.
4. Reassure the person with each step i.e. "You are doing great."

### Maintain a calm, soothing environment

1. Soft sounds and voices are best. Music can be comforting.
2. Give a reassuring touch when appropriate.
3. Avoid surprises of abrupt movements.
4. Keep environment as consistent as possible. Even slight changes can be upsetting.

### Know what to do if the person becomes agitated

1. Try to figure out the source of the upset. Does he/she need to use the bathroom? Is he/she ill or in pain?
2. Change the subject if it appears to bother the person.
3. Distract and try to involve them in a different activity.

Please contact the DEMENTIA SA Office

Support | Awareness | Education | Counseling | Training | Resource centre | Advocacy  
*info@dementiasa.org or support@dementiasa.org* [www.dementiasa.org](http://www.dementiasa.org)

**National Helpline 0860 MEMORY / 0860 636 679**

### Use the patient's view of reality

1. Reality orientation (except sometimes for time and place) is not effective with those who suffer with severe memory loss.
2. Remember that their reality is different from yours. Whenever possible, just go along with the person and "be in their world". Don't argue as it will not be productive.

### Remember that patience is essential

1. The Alzheimer's disease may little or no control over strange verbal, physical or sexual behavior.
2. The person often cannot remember enough about their past reasoning or behavior patterns to always respond appropriately.
3. Understand that what can seem like manipulative behaviour it's just the disease.

### Contact us:

Tel: (021) 421 0077/78  
Email: [info@dementiasa.org](mailto:info@dementiasa.org)  
Or [support@dementiasa.org](mailto:support@dementiasa.org)

3rd Floor,  
State House,  
3 Rose Street,  
Cape Town

P.O. Box 16421  
Vlaeberg  
8018



[www.dementiasa.org](http://www.dementiasa.org)

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