

The James L. West Center for Dementia Care is launching a Tool Kit for lay and professional caregivers who are providing support to persons with dementia during this critical time. To receive ongoing information, contact caregiver@jameslwest.org.

As part of the Dementia Care Tool Kit, the West Center will share information frequently with the goal of providing support to communities and persons in need. The West Center is North Texas' trusted resource for dementia care and education.

Daily Routine:

- Structure is important for persons living with dementia. Maintaining a daily routine will lead to more successful days.
 - > Create a normalized daily routine. For example, maintain rituals with waking up, going to bed, and eating meals at or around the same time every day. It is important to create a routine that focuses on personal hygiene (brushing teeth, showering, etc.), getting dressed and everything that goes into getting "ready for the day".
 - > Keep purposeful activities and relaxation time scheduled throughout the day.
 - Encourage physical activity and getting outside for sunshine, fresh air, and a change of scenery. This may include a walk to the mailbox, having tea on the back porch, chair exercises and stretches, etc.
 - Note: The senior population is among the most vulnerable at this time so use discernment when visiting public spaces.

Media Exposure and Technology:

- Limit T.V. time and programs. Many T.V. programs and news stations easily cause confusion and unnecessary agitation for those living with dementia. To stay up-to-date with current news and announcements consider tuning in when your loved is occupied elsewhere or stay up-to-date with apps that only you have access to on your phone or tablet.
- Keep your loved one active. As opportunities for social engagement lessen, it is important to use technology to connect with others. Consider using technology to connect with grandchildren, etc.
- Explore online dementia education resources including jameslwestlearn.org
- Contact the Alzheimer's Association 24 hour help line 800.272.3900

Cognitive Activity:

- Depending on the ability level of the person living with dementia, consider making lists for things you would normally do (grocery shopping, building, cleaning, etc.), play games, read, trivia, art, reminisce, etc.
- Engage in sensory activities (touch, smell, sound)
- For more ideas and how to set-up an activity [click here](#)

Physical Activity:

- Take a walk to the mailbox to get mail, stretch, complete chair exercises, dance to familiar songs, etc.

Spiritual Activity:

- Watch an online religious service, recite/read the Bible, prayers and Devotionals.
 - > Listen to spiritual songs

Emotional Activity Suggestions:

- Reminisce using photo albums, tell stories, listen to favorite songs (For more ideas and how to set-up an activity [click here](#))

Managing Stress:

- Caregiver – Incorporate daily stress management techniques you're your routine (meditation, journaling, yoga, deep breathing, etc.) [Click here for a guided caregiver meditation.](#)
 - > Participate in an online support group, take 15 minutes relaxation breaks, seek in-home care if needed. Note: Routines are important in order to maintain a healthy immune system and sleep pattern.
 - Be realistic about what you can "get done" if working from home.
 - Manage your expectations – focus on the main things that need to happen and don't worry about all the little things.
 - Don't argue, boss, or force the person you are caring for. Go with the flow when the person's safety is not in danger.
 - Ask for help--In times of change your loved will experience stress and anxiety which can manifest itself in less sleep, agitation, more confusion, etc. Note: These are considered normal behavioral responses for people living with dementia.
- Care receiver – Try to maintain a structured routine as the person you are caring for will pick up on your anxiety, stress, and/or frustration.

James L. West is a faith-inspired, not-for-profit organization serving persons impacted by dementia. As a trusted expert, we provide personalized, innovative care and support for families, as well as specialized education for caregiver, healthcare professionals and the community at large.

The West Center presents this information with the support of the following organizations:

