

## Caring for Someone with Dementia While Isolated at Home

Caring for a person with Dementia at home without opportunity for respite can be a challenge. Here are some tips and activity ideas to make your time less stressful.

1. Maintain a consistent schedule.
  - a. Consider posting a daily schedule. Having a consistent schedule will help with anxiety. Let your loved one know what to expect. If they can tell time, then include the time on your schedule. When they ask what is next bring them to the schedule and show them, so they get used to looking at the schedule for their cues.
2. Post signs and written cues around the house.
  - a. Post a sign in the bathroom to remind them to wash their hands. Label doors if needed. The more cues you place in the environment the better. It promotes independence and means you can do less reminding and directing.
3. Create a backup plan for caregiving in case you, the caregiver, becomes ill.
  - a. Discuss with family and friends or set up to hire a caregiving agency if needed.
4. Get support for yourself.
  - a. Join a virtual caregiving support group.
    - i. A list is available through the Alzheimer's Association:  
[https://www.alz.org/cacentralcoast/helping\\_you/support-groups](https://www.alz.org/cacentralcoast/helping_you/support-groups)
  - b. Reach out to family and friends. Its important that you stay healthy and cared for so that you can continue your role as caregiver.
5. Reach out for resources.
  - a. Call your local Caregiving Resource Center to talk to a care manager. The Ventura County Area Agency on Aging can direct you to find your local center: 805-477-7300.
6. Plan activities to reduce boredom. Boredom can often lead to anxiety or behaviors. Keep your loved one engaged with some activity ideas:
  - Folding & organizing laundry
  - Sorting-coins, buttons (grouping in colors or sizes).
  - Puzzles - jigsaw, etc.
  - Coloring
  - Look up "this day in history" and share the memories.
  - Picking flowers from the backyard
  - Sorting the silverware (grouping spoons & forks)
  - Organizing magazines
  - Brushing your pet's hair
  - Word search puzzles (we can email you some!)
  - Singing along to favorite music
  - Engage in a free "virtual activity" through the Alzheimer's Foundation of America. Scroll to the bottom of the website to see what is offered and how to sign up: <https://alzfdn.org/>
  - Enjoy a virtual field trip through a museum. Many museums are now offering virtual tours. One is through the Museum of Natural History: <https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NMNH/>
  - Enjoy an online concert. You can view nightly operas streamed through the Metropolitan Opera: <https://www.metopera.org/>

