

STAYING PURPOSEFUL

What's important?

After a person is diagnosed with dementia, it's important to maintain a sense of purpose to their life by engaging in tasks or activities that are meaningful to them; those that reflect their skills and ability. You might want to consider asking the following questions:

- 1) *What or who is important to them?*
- 2) *What skills do they have?*
- 3) *What interests them?*
- 4) *Do you have the time?*
- 5) *Do you need support or help?*
- 6) *How practical is it?*

Tips on how to make a person living with dementia remain purposeful, useful and feel good about themselves:

- ✿ *Maintain residual skills, compensate for lost activities*
- ✿ *Reminisce about fond memories with photos, music, stories*
- ✿ *Encourage learning new skills*
- ✿ *If recent memories are fading, talk about good times in the distant past*
- ✿ *Discuss familiar objects that have meaning e.g. paintings, pictures, souvenirs, bric-a-brac*
- ✿ *Try engaging in activities they used to do*
- ✿ *Ask them to help you water the garden, set the table, fold washing, clean benches etc.*
- ✿ *Do activities you can share; games, going to the zoo, concerts, exhibitions. St Luke's Care offers excursions for those living with dementia and their carers*
- ✿ *Include sensory experiences e.g. things to watch, listen, smell, taste, touch*
- ✿ *Take the person for a walk somewhere interesting*
- ✿ *Stay social; visit family and friends*

Remember:

- ✿ *Avoid correcting the person*
- ✿ *Promote self-esteem; empower the individual*
- ✿ *Engage the person with tasks that match their ability*
- ✿ *Communicate clearly and use shorter sentences*
- ✿ *Give them time to respond*
- ✿ *Maintain eye contact at their level*
- ✿ *Try not to over-stimulate*
- ✿ *Encourage the person to do things without nagging or arguing*
- ✿ *Plan to go to places that are safe and easily accessible*
- ✿ *Select times when they function at their best (e.g. mornings or afternoons)*
- ✿ *Most importantly, be patient and stay calm*

At St Luke's Care, our specially trained dementia support team is here for you and your loved one. We have many programs including home care, residential aged care, respite care and social and community programs.



ST LUKE'S CARE

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