



Responding to Memory Loss, Confusion, and Emotional Changes

Caring for someone with dementia means facing moments where they forget your name, confuse the past with the present, or suddenly become upset for reasons that aren't clear. These moments are hard—both for them and for you.

But how you respond can make all the difference.

Memory Loss

When your loved one asks the same question again and again, or forgets things that just happened, it can be frustrating. But for them, the moment feels new every time.

What you can do:

- ✓ **Stay calm and kind.** Answer like it's the first time.
- ✓ **Use simple reminders.** Notes, calendars, or labels around the house can help.
- ✓ **Don't say "I already told you."** It can make them feel embarrassed or ashamed.
- ✓ **Connect with emotion.** Even if they forget your name, they often remember how you make them feel.

Tip: It's okay to let go of correcting the facts. Focus instead on comfort and connection.

Confusion

Dementia can blur the lines between time, place, and people. Your loved one might think they're still in their childhood home or ask about people who've passed away.

What you can do:

- ✓ **Don't argue.** Correcting them can increase fear and resistance.
- ✓ **Join their reality.** Say, "Tell me about that place," instead of "That's not true."
- ✓ **Redirect gently.** If they're upset, guide the conversation to a calming memory or familiar object.
- ✓ **Offer reassurance.** A warm voice, a touch on the hand, or saying "You're safe" can calm fear.

Tip: Confusion often rises when routines are broken - keep their day predictable where possible.



☁ Emotional Changes

Your loved one may cry suddenly, get angry, or seem anxious for no clear reason. This is the illness speaking, not the person.

What you can do:

- ✓ **Watch your tone.** Speak slowly, softly, and without showing anger—even if you're tired.
- ✓ **Don't take it personally.** Their reaction is not about you—it's a response to fear, frustration, or confusion.
- ✓ **Soothe with presence.** Sometimes silence, a hug, or sitting beside them is more powerful than words.
- ✓ **Look for patterns.** Are they hungry? Tired? Overstimulated? Meeting these needs may ease their emotions.

Tip: A consistent daily routine helps reduce emotional stress.

♥ Remember: Connection Over Correction

In difficult moments, **they may forget what you said - but not how you made them feel.**

Meet them with patience. Respond with empathy. And give yourself grace.

You're learning. You're loving. And that's more than enough.