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We Have a Choice

Meditation

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There are some instances in life where it feels as if we do not have a choice. Having choices can make us feel empowered and hopeful. When someone we know and love is living with dementia we have choices to make, and these choices can make a huge impact on the life of someone living with dementia. As I work on a new project for PAC on spirituality, I have had the honor of interviewing some of our friends living with brain change. When they tell me about the times that have caused them the greatest pain or joy, it always has to do with relationships. My friends on the interviews tell me about times when they have felt like they don't exist because no one knows how to talk to them when they get their diagnosis, and the message from these individuals is, "please come visit me, talk to me, and see me."

Then there are my friends that tell stories of their communities finding ways to help them, continue to be involved in whatever ways they can and with whatever skills they have. One person told me that even if he leaves his supplies out or makes a mistake, there is someone who will clean up after him without saying a word about what he has forgotten to do. Another person, with a smile on his face, talks about how his wife finally understands how important it is to him to let him take care of her sometimes.

When someone we know or love is diagnosed with dementia, we can feel helpless, but there are many choices we still can make, and these choices can have a significant impact on the lives of people living with dementia and our own life. The choice to visit, talk to, and see a person living with dementia is ours to make, and can make all the difference in the world to them.