



## Building A **Dementia Friendly Community** in Eagle Country

## TIPS FOR SHOPS AND BUSINESSES

We are an aging society, and more of our friends and customers will be coping with the challenges of dementia. When they visit your business, they will sometimes require extra assistance. Here are some simple tips to help make your business a dementia friendly place to visit.

### 1. SPEAK CLEARLY

Speak clearly, calmly and slowly, allowing the person time to understand information. Use short and simple sentences, avoiding direct questions. Keep choices to a minimum, and don't raise your voice.

When possible talk in a noise free, non-distracting setting or find a quiet corner. If the person finds it difficult to locate a word, you can suggest one, but be careful not to interrupt or finish the sentence for them.

### 2. BODY LANGUAGE

People with dementia may find it difficult to understand what is being said, but can be quick to interpret the message on people's faces. Smile warmly, make eye contact, use a friendly tone and respect personal space.

### 3. LISTEN

Listen carefully to what the person has to say, offering encouragement, while seeking clues about what they may be trying to communicate.

### 4. SHOW RESPECT AND PATIENCE

Adapt your words if the person with dementia does not understand you. Allow them time to find the words to tell you what they want. Don't rush, but adjust to their space.

### 5. NOISE AND LIGHT

If possible, reduce unnecessary noise or move to a quieter area. Make certain that lighting is sufficient for the person to see you and everything around them clearly.

### 6. HELP WITH HANDLING MONEY

Counting money, calculating and handling change, and knowing the value of money can all be challenging for someone with dementia. Offer to help by counting out money and providing a receipt.

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## 8. FEELING LOST

Sometimes people with dementia may feel lost in familiar places or forget where they live. If someone is lost and distressed, offer to help by asking if they have identification with their address. If necessary, the police can help.

## 9. RECOGNIZING AND FINDING THINGS

People with dementia may have forgotten what they came into the business for, or they may have a list but experience problems finding the things they want. Offer to help, making certain they purchase the proper quantity, especially if they appear to be buying an unusually large amount of something.

## 10. MAKING CHOICES

For someone with dementia, too much choice can be confusing, and a restaurant menu may be overwhelming. Ask what the person would like, and suggest two or three likely options. Remember to pause between each option to allow them to think and make a decision.

## 11. WHOSE REALITY?

The person may be confused and say something that does not make sense to you. Avoid making the person feel embarrassed by contradicting them. Try to find a way to shift the conversation.

## 12. BEING PREDICTABLE

A person who shops with you regularly and comfortably may be confused if things have been rearranged or if they are served by a new employee. If possible, have the same person serve them each time they visit, even though they may not remember you or what you discussed on their last visit.

## 13. DON'T EXCLUDE THE PERSON

In many cases, the person with dementia will be accompanied by a family member or friend, whose presence can be very helpful. But do not look past the person to address questions only to the one accompanying him or her. Make certain the person is included in the conversation.

## 14. EVERY DAY CAN BE DIFFERENT

For some persons with dementia, what they can understand and do varies from day to day, so how you help them may need to be different each time they visit. Be attentive to their current status and offer help when needed.



Want to learn more? Have Questions?

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