

Supporting the Dementia Caregiver

When you have a friend or family member who has dementia or is the caregiver of someone with dementia, it can be hard to know how to help. This can be due to many things: the complexity and duration of the disease, your own experience supporting others, and the availability of resources. Friends and family are vital in championing day-to-day wellness and a sense of community! And we now know you too may feel better when finding ways to be involved. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

NOTE: If you're a primary caregiver printing this out for a family member or friend, feel free to make this worksheet your own: cross out ideas that are not relevant to you, or use the space below to add specific needs not listed here.

The Gift of Energy	The Gift of Time	The Gift of Friendship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run an errand. • Clean the house. • Make freezer meals. • Send restaurant meal delivery. • Do yard work. • Collect and drop off recyclables/trash. • Do laundry/ironing. • Help with computer work. • Complete or arrange a home safety evaluation. • Offer to communicate with family and friends. • Coordinate involvement of other friends and family members. • Send/drop off a care package. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the person with dementia on an outing for a few hours. • Offer to complete unwanted tasks (e.g., calling the cable company). • Spend time with the person with dementia while the caregiver runs errands. • Coordinate a weekend away for the caregiver. • Walk the dog or clean the kitty litter. • Research community resources or other services. • Bring a favorite beverage or snack on a tough day or week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in touch. • Offer a safe space for the caregiver to vent without judgment. • Listen. • Be a sounding board (if welcomed). • Go to a dementia support group with the caregiver. • Plan a special break for the caregiver, including care for the person with dementia. • Learn what you can about dementia. • Offer fun activities. • Cry together. • Laugh together. • Remember birthdays and special events. • Continue to invite the caregiver to events/outings.

Here are some additional things that could be helpful:
