

# Someone Close to You Has Dementia

Supporting and caring for someone with dementia can be stressful but it can also be rewarding. Care partners, relatives and friends often go through a range of emotions, including loss, guilt and anger. They may also feel the satisfaction of making a difference in the wellbeing of the person with dementia.

## All emotions are normal.

Below are some tips for supporting someone living with dementia:

- Take care of yourself and your needs. Seek out a support group in your area.
- Know that there are no perfect solutions and no perfect families. You can only do your best and that's good enough.
- Respect the person's self-worth and desire to contribute. Help him or her find meaningful things to do, from everyday chores to leisure activities.
- Treat the person as an adult at all times and under all circumstances.
- Focus on what the person can do rather than what they cannot.
- Be patient and flexible.
- Understand the person still wants to feel a sense of control; offer choices and ask for input and opinions.
- Avoid saying "Do you remember?" or "I've already told you." Simply repeating it again or offering a written note to refer to later will go a long way in easing the tension for you both.

"I kept trying to imagine what it was like to be in John's shoes, slowly and surely losing abilities, self-esteem and self-confidence. When I felt frustrated I would tell myself 'if he could, he would.'"

