



In Care of You

A NEWSLETTER FOR CAREGIVERS FROM THE GREENE COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

JULY – AUGUST 2026

PREVENTING OR DEFUSING AGGRESSION

When people with dementia become frustrated, scared or unable to communicate, they may become irritable or angry. Sometimes a person may experience a catastrophic reaction. This may occur in response to variety of occurrences including: loud noise (radio, TV, person), multiple questions, “why” questions, feeling insecure, feeling left out, small accidents, being reprimanded, arguments, a tense or irritable caregiver, or tasks that are too difficult. Try to see the situation from the patient’s point of view.

- Make sure your loved one gets enough sleep. Fatigue can cause combativeness.
- Reduce loud noises and physical clutter in your home. Loud noises and clutter can over stimulate your loved one. Limit guests to one or two at a time, and use television sparingly.
- Don't expect too much. Don't try to teach new information or ask your loved one to perform tasks he or she has been unable to complete in the past. This only results in frustration.
- Include exercise and light housekeeping chores in your loved one's daily routine. This may reduce the restlessness that can lead to agitation and aggression.
- Don't argue with or quiz your loved one to test his or her memory. This can lead to agitation. If you need to ask your loved one questions, make them easy to understand and ask them one at a time.
- Keep your loved one's routine and environment consistent and simple. Changes — even small ones — can cause agitation. If you need to make changes, make them gradually.
- Try to be pleasant. If you're feeling angry, stressed, irritated or impatient, try not to let it show. Respond to your loved one in a calm, reassuring way. That doesn't mean you should deny your feelings, however. Just try to deal with them at a later time, and it may be a cue that it is time to obtain additional assistance, so you can have some respite from caregiving responsibilities.
- If your loved one becomes frustrated, provide reassurance and distract him or her with another activity. After some time has elapsed, you can return to the original activity if necessary.
- Don't panic. If your loved one becomes agitated or aggressive, don't resort to physical force. Try instead to soothe your loved one by holding hands, gently patting his or her back. Some people do not like to be touched when they are feeling agitated, and for those individuals it may be best to leave the room or to sit quietly a safe distance from him or her.
- Consider the 5 “R”s in handling catastrophic reactions: Remain calm, respond to feelings, reassure the person, remove yourself, return later.
- Check out the reality of a situation; maybe what the person says or thinks is true.
- Remember that whispering or laughing around the person may be misinterpreted.
- Consult a physician. Sometimes agitation is caused or aggravated by physical symptoms of pain, discomfort, physical illness or a co-occurring depression.



Shadowing behavior in dementia

She follows me down the hallway, into the kitchen, back to the living room.

Not because she wants to—but because I am her safe place.

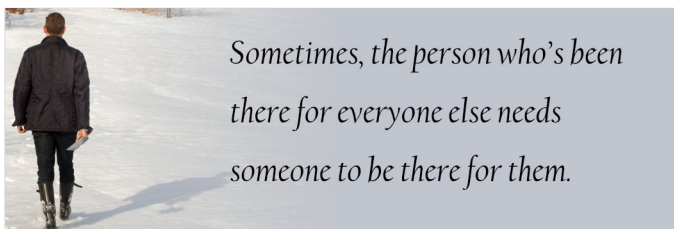
She doesn't remember where I'm going, only the fear of being alone when I'm gone.

So she shadows my steps, holding onto the one thing that still feels certain.

This isn't clinginess. It's dementia asking for reassurance in the only way it knows how.

And when I slow down, take her hand, and say "I'm here. You're not alone," it's for both of us.

Ngozi Odawayi Nwosu



Caregiver Reminders

1. You cannot entertain anyone 24/7. Give yourself grace.
2. Everyone has bad days and grieves. Do not take bad days to heart
3. You are doing the best you can with the knowledge you have.
4. Your loved one is not giving you a hard time. They are having a hard time, and so can you.
5. You are human. Your past self would be so proud. Give yourself credit for showing up.

Ways to Engage a Senior with Dementia

1. Play music from their era
2. Look through old photos together
3. Try large-print word puzzles.
4. Bake a recipe they used to make
5. Gentle sensory activities—texture scent, touch



Support Groups Summer Schedule

Month	Yellow Springs	Beavercreek	Xenia
May	Mon, May 4	Tue, May 12	Wed, May 6
June	Mon, June 1	Tue, June 9	Wed, June 3
July	Mon, July 6	Tue, July 14	Wed, July 1
August	Mon, Aug 3	Tue, Aug 11	Wed, Aug 5

Beavercreek will begin meeting again on the 4th Tuesday in September

Support Groups

- 1st Monday of the month at 4pm, First Presbyterian Church, 314 Xenia Ave, Yellow Springs
- 1st Wednesday of the month at 11:30 am, GCCOA Xenia office
- 2nd Tuesday at 9:30 am, Peace Lutheran Church, 3530 Dayton • Xenia Rd, Beavercreek

Weekly Radio Segment: Partners in Caregiving every Thursday soon after 6pm, WBZI—FM 100.3 AM 1500 Also available online: gcco.org/radio