

Building a Dementia Friendly Community in Stillorgan/Blackrock

TIPS FOR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

People with dementia and memory problems live in your area, probably on your street. You may also have friends or neighbours with dementia. Common signs of dementia are confusion, forgetfulness, struggling to find words and repetitiveness. This can make everyday situations stressful.

Sometimes they will need extra assistance to help them with everyday things

Here are some simple tips that may help you, help someone with dementia.

Living Well with Dementia

Stillorgan - Blackrock

1

Speak clearly

Speak clearly, calmly and slowly to allow the person time to understand and process the information. Use simple short sentences and avoid direct questions. Keep choices to a minimum and don't raise your voice. Don't test their memory - tell them who you are.

Where possible, talk in a noise-free, non-distracting place. If the person struggles to find a word, you could 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 still understand facial expressions and body language. Smile warmly, make eye contact, make sure you are at the person's level, use a friendly tone and respect their personal space.

3

Show Respect and Patience

Adapt what you are saying if the person with dementia does not understand. Don't rush them. Try to go at their pace. Treat them as you would wish to be treated.

4

Listen

Listen carefully to what the person has to say, giving plenty of encouragement while looking out for other clues about what they might be trying to communicate. Allow them time to find the words.

5

Talk to the person

Try to always include the person with dementia in the conversation even though they may not be able to respond. By automatically directing a conversation to their partner or carer, the person with dementia may feel excluded and undermined. Don't be concerned by repetitive talk - they honestly forget.

6

Finding the way

People with dementia sometimes forget their way or become disorientated. They may also forget where they now live. If someone is lost or distressed, perhaps you can offer to walk with them to their destination. Ask if they have an ID card with a contact number for their next of kin. If you can't help them and they seem at risk, the Gardaí will help.

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