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Overview

- How Might it Feel?
- A Few Facts
- Building Knowledge
 - What is Dementia
 - Types
 - Signs
- Recognizing a patron with Dementia
- Dementia Friendly Communication Strategies
- Taking Action in the Library

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How Might It Feel?

- I don't feel respected.
- I feel ignored.
- I'm misunderstood.
- I'm not accepted.
- I feel isolated.
- People talk to my husband instead of me.
- I've lost many of my friends because they don't understand.
- People talk too fast.
- They give too much information.
- I feel rushed when trying to do something.

"When I feel rushed, it's harder for me to think."



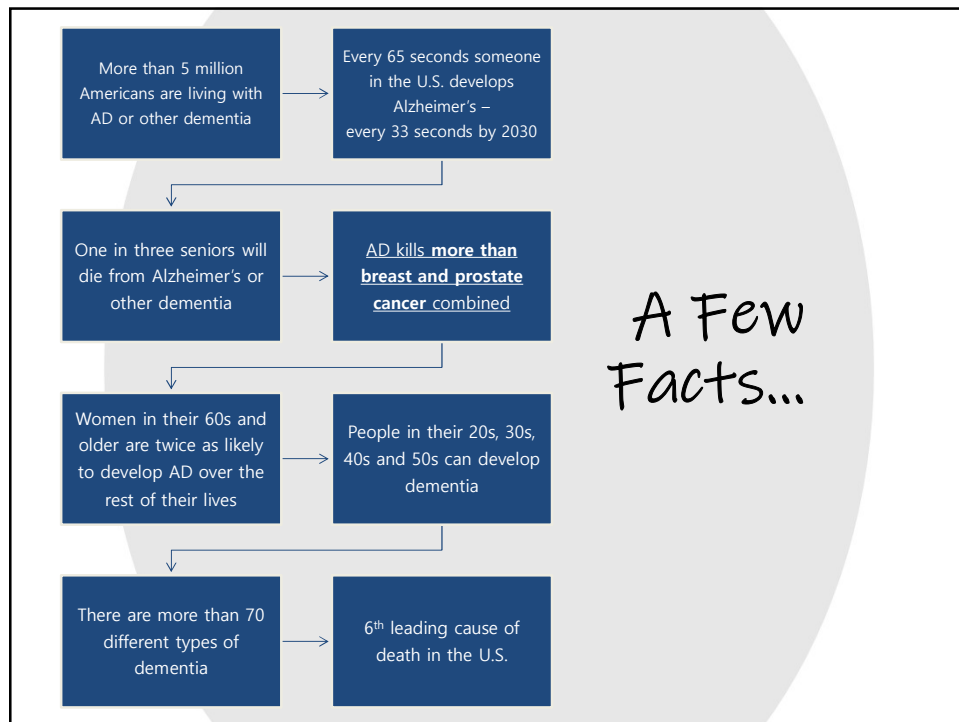
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What Does It Mean To Be Dementia Friendly?



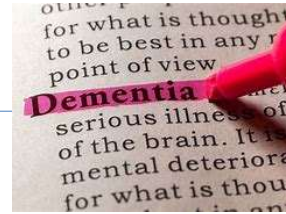
Becoming a **dementia-friendly business** is **one that:**

- Looks through the eyes of a person with dementia
- Enables people to carry on doing the things they want to **do**.
- Recognizes the signs
- Trains its employees to understand how dementia may impact and change its customer's needs so that employees are better equipped
- Makes it easier for people with dementia to do everyday business

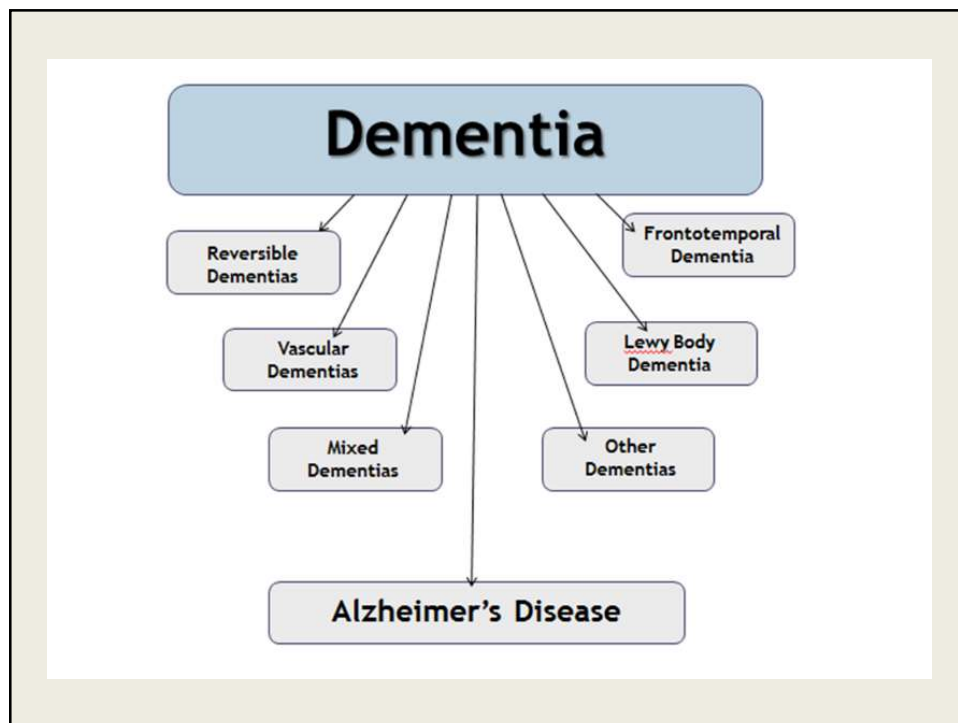
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What is Dementia

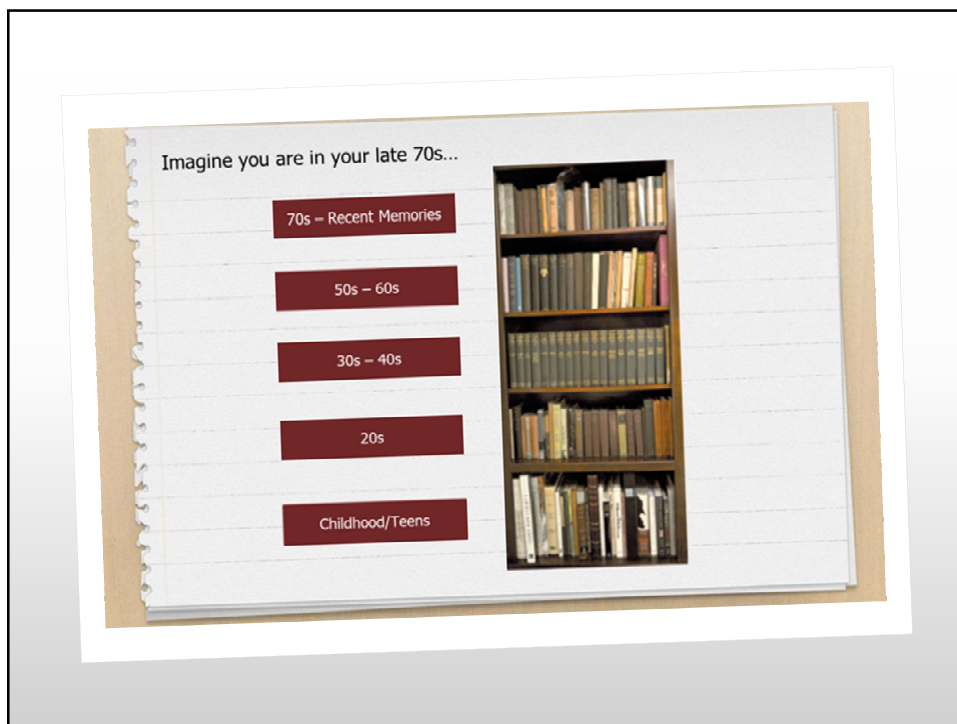
- Dementia is not a specific disease, but a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life and perform everyday activities
- Causes changes in:
 - Memory
 - Language
 - Thoughts
 - Navigation Abilities
 - Behavior
 - Personality and Mood
 - Planning and Organizing Ability
- Importantly, the decline must represent a decline from a previously higher level of functioning
- More than 70 different types of dementia....Alzheimer's disease is the most common
- *Dementia is NOT normal aging....and is much more than losing your memory*



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As dementia progresses....

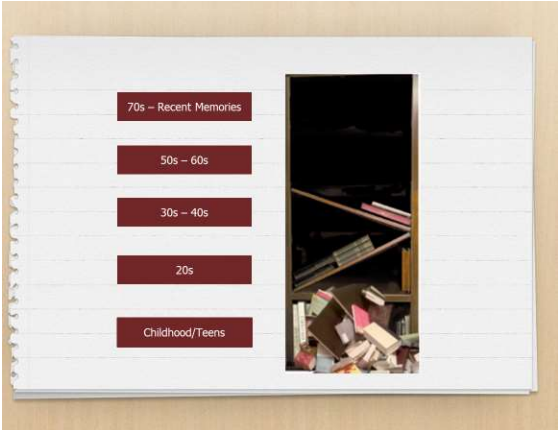
My recent memories are empty...they start falling off the shelf.

When my top shelves are empty, I might find myself living in the past, lower down the bookcase. If I am living in the 50s, I may not know the name of the President. (Truman/Roosevelt)

I might be confused about why my home looks different, or why the TV doesn't have any knobs to turn

Once you understand my reality, you can better support me.

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70s - Recent Memories

50s - 60s

30s - 40s

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Childhood/Teens

I may not remember what you said, but I will remember how you made me feel.

As the disease progresses into the later stages, I may not remember my daughter's name or that I have a daughter. I will, however, remember her feelings from that visit, feelings of love, comfort and support.

Equally, if I my daughter were to argue with me and tell me that I am her mother, I may not remember the details of the argument, but I will remember the feelings of anger and hurt from the exchange.

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What are the Signs

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
 - New information, important dates, repeating questions, relying on family members
- Challenges in planning or problem solving
 - Recipes, monthly bills, longer time for tasks
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
 - Driving to familiar places, budget, rules of a game, hobby, grocery shopping
- Confusion to time or place
 - Dates, seasons, passage of time, getting lost in own neighborhood
- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
 - Reading, judging distance, determining color or contrast – troubles with driving

Source: Alzheimer's Association, www.alz.org

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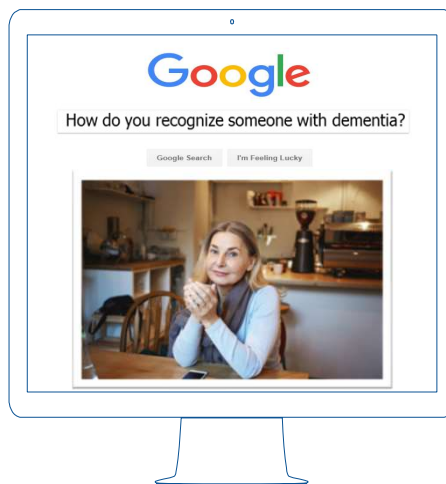
What are the Signs

- New problems with words (speaking/writing)
 - Trouble following conversations, stopping mid-sentence, word finding, wrong words
- Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgment
 - Ex – For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money, giving large amounts to telemarketers. They may pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean
- Withdrawal from social events
 - Isolating from social/family events, remove self from hobbies, etc.
- Changes in mood and personality
 - They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious. They may be easily upset at home, at work, with friends or in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

Source: Alzheimer's Association, www.alz.org

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How Do You Recognize Someone



Usually you can't....but there are some clues:

- Most people are over 65....but more people are being diagnosed at a younger age
- Some people will tell you if they are having problems and how you can help
- Some people carry a card which explains the problems they have
- You might notice someone doing or saying things which suggest that they are having problems that might be caused by dementia


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Physical Clues:

- A blank or confused facial expression, looking a bit lost
- Appear to be searching for something they can't find
- Unsteady walk/loss of balance
- Repeats questions
- Inappropriate clothing for the season
- Actions (appears to be doing something that is unsafe, yet they are unaware of their actions)

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Psychological Clues:

- Inability to grasp and remember the current situation
- Difficulty in judging the passage of time
- Agitation, confusion, withdrawal or anger
- Inability to sort out the obvious
- Communication problems – speech might be hard to understand
- Delusions/hallucinations
- Inability to follow directions

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Communication to Help...

- Greet from the front with a smile
- Help the person focus by making eye contact
- Speak slowly and clearly...be patient
- Tell or ask one thing at a time
- Give time to respond
- Never argue
- Show you care
- Listen
- Watch your mood & body language



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Communication to Help...

- Use gestures
- Remain calm
- Use pictures or simple written information
- Rephrase
- Simplify the choices
- Reduce distractions if possible



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Taking Action...

Source: Dementia Friendly America
<https://www.dfamerica.org/>



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<https://vimeo.com/331691653>

Taking Action

- Train all staff and volunteers
 - Dementia Friends, <https://wai.wisc.edu/dementiafriendswi/>
- Offer library materials helpful for caregivers of people living with dementia, but also materials that can engage and stimulate people living with the disease, including:
 - <https://www.reading2connect.com/>
 - Nonfiction books on an array of topics
 - Short fiction
 - Poetry
 - Books that are highly illustrated with color photographs – animals, flowers, old cars, etc.
 - Audio books, magazines, music and videos
- Select library materials that reflect the history and experience of diverse groups
- Offer individual appointments
- Display Alzheimer's disease related books during National Alzheimer's Awareness (November)
- Create memory boxes or reminiscence kits for patrons to check out.
- Have a take-home resource bag of materials appropriate for people living with dementia and for family caregivers.

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Hosting Programs

- Host a Dementia Friends Information Session
- Be a site for educational programs on dementia, Alzheimer's disease and brain health
- Offer educational programming for persons who are caregivers
- Be a site for support groups
- Organize and offer a book club or create a book club kit
- Consider hosting a memory cafe



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Taking Library Services and Materials to the Community

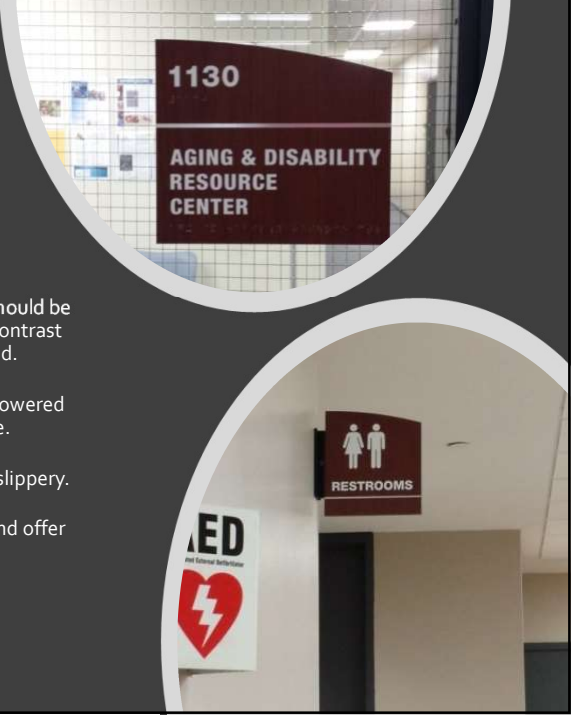
- Offer to bring programs using library materials to senior living communities
 - <http://talesandtravelmemories.com/>
- Offer a one-person bookmobile
- Provide a read-a-loud program



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Dementia Friendly Physical Space

- Entrances should be clearly visible and understood as an entrance.
- Signage for finding your way around should be clear, use bold type, and should have contrast between the words and the background.
- Lighting at entrances should be high powered and include natural light when possible.
- Flooring should be plain, not shiny, or slippery.
- Restrooms should be clearly marked and offer a family restroom.
- Have plenty of seating.
- Make the spaces inviting.



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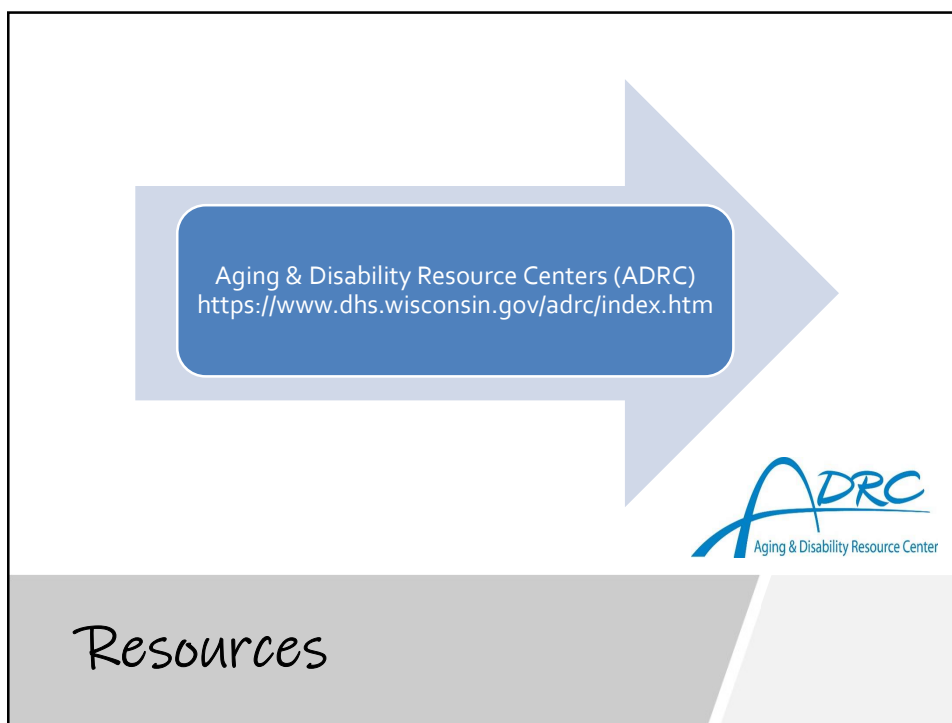
Put Yourself in Their Shoes...

- Acknowledge and consider their feelings
- Accept people with their limitations
- Reassure
- Show compassion
- Respect



"Please help me maintain my self-worth and dignity."

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Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC)
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm>

ADRC
Aging & Disability Resource Center

Resources

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