

If I Get Dementia....

By Rachael Wonderlin

And I would add one more: (by anon)

Every time you enter the room announce yourself.

"Hi Mom- it's Margaret."

NEVER ask Do you know who I am??? That causes anxiety.

- 1. If I get dementia, I want my friends and family to embrace my reality.*
- 2. If I think my spouse is still alive, or if I think we're visiting my parents for dinner, let me believe those things. I'll be much happier for it.*
- 3. If I get dementia, don't argue with me about what is true for me versus what is true for you.*
- 4. If I get dementia, and I am not sure who you are, do not take it personally. My timeline is confusing to me.*
- 5. If I get dementia, and can no longer use utensils, do not start feeding me. Instead, switch me to a finger-food diet, and see if I can still feed myself.*
- 6. If I get dementia, and I am sad or anxious, hold my hand and listen. Do not tell me that my feelings are unfounded.*
- 7. If I get dementia, I don't want to be treated like a child. Talk to me like the adult that I am.*
- 8. If I get dementia, I still want to enjoy the things that I've always enjoyed. Help me find a way to exercise, read, and visit with friends.*
- 9. If I get dementia, ask me to tell you a story from my past.*
- 10. If I get dementia, and I become agitated, take the time to figure out what is bothering me.*
- 11. If I get dementia, treat me the way that you would want to be treated.*
- 12. If I get dementia, make sure that there are plenty of snacks for me in the house. Even now if I don't eat I get angry, and if I have dementia, I may have trouble explaining what I need.*
- 13. If I get dementia, don't talk about me as if I'm not in the room.*
- 14. If I get dementia, don't feel guilty if you cannot care for me 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's not your fault, and you've done your best. Find someone who can help you, or choose a great new place for me to live.*
- 15. If I get dementia, and I live in a dementia care community, please visit me often.*
- 16. If I get dementia, don't act frustrated if I mix up names, events, or places. Take a deep breath. It's not my fault.*
- 17. If I get dementia, make sure I always have my favourite music playing within earshot.*
- 18. If I get dementia, and I like to pick up items and carry them around, help me return those items to their original place.*
- 19. If I get dementia, don't exclude me from parties and family gatherings.*
- 20. If I get dementia, know that I still like receiving hugs or handshakes.*
- 21. If I get dementia, remember that I am still the person you know and love.*