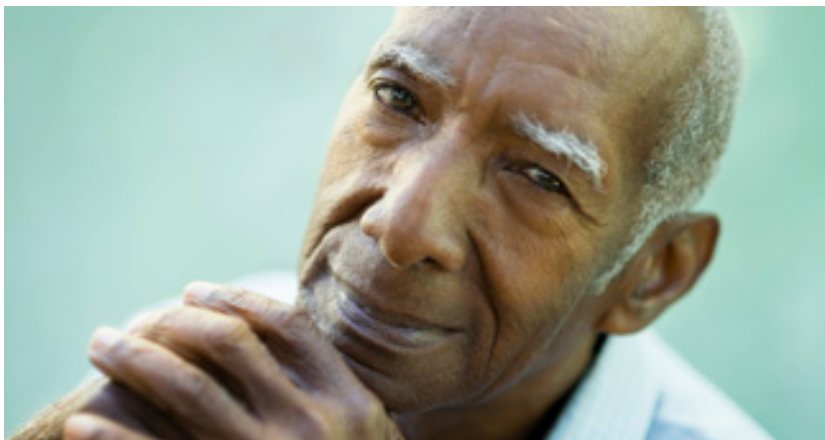


Living with the stigma of Alzheimer's

Facing stigma is often a primary concern of people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias and their care partners. Myths and misconceptions that others have about the disease can unwittingly create significant obstacles to well-being and quality of life for those with dementia and their families.

If you are a person living with cognitive loss, here are some things you might experience:

- ❖ Friends may refuse to believe your diagnosis or withdraw from your life, leaving a feeling of abandonment or isolation.
- ❖ Relationships with family may change. Family members may not want to talk about the disease, perceive you as having limited abilities or may avoid interacting with you.
- ❖ Others may approach your care partner to ask about you rather than asking you directly how you are doing.
- ❖ The reaction of some friends and family to your diagnosis may prevent you from seeking help from others.



You are not alone

If you have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia - or if you are a care partner - you are not alone. There are people who understand what you are going through. Help is available - at all hours of the day and night. There is much you can do - especially in the early stage - to cope with the changes ahead.

Learn more:

- call our free 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900
- or email info@alz.org
- online at alz.org/help-support/i-have-alz



"I'm still the same person"

People living with early-stage Alzheimer's or other dementias would like you to know:

- ❖ "I'm still the same person I was before my diagnosis."
- ❖ "My independence is important to me; ask me what I'm still comfortable doing and what I may need help with."
- ❖ "It's important that I stay engaged. Invite me to do activities we both enjoy."
- ❖ "Don't make assumptions because of my diagnosis. Alzheimer's affects each person differently."
- ❖ "Ask me how I'm doing. I'm living with a disease, just like cancer or heart disease."
- ❖ "I can still engage in meaningful conversation. Talk directly to me if you want to know how I am."
- ❖ "Don't pull away. It's OK if you don't know what to do or say. Your friendship and support are important to me."



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