



# For Carers, by Carers: Friends, family and community



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Our relationships with our friends and family are important to us. They are important to maintaining your own physical and mental wellbeing. Friends, family members and links within the community can help a person with dementia to feel valued and included, and they also provide invaluable support to you as a carer. Do not be afraid to communicate with friends, other family members and wider community contacts, and ask them for support if necessary. A listening ear or a few hours of respite can make all the difference.



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**Don't face a problem alone. Simply talking things through with others can help you feel that you're not the only one going through this.**

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“Getting to know other carers can be a great source of support as they will have had similar experiences to you.”

#### What carers would like to share with you:

- “Staying connected takes a real effort sometimes but is a priority for preventing isolation for both yourself and the person with dementia.”
- “Ask family and friends to look after the person you care for for an hour or two while you go out.”
- “Having a hobby or interest of your own will help you maintain your identity and connect with others.”
- “Continue to take an interest in what’s going on in the lives of family and friends. This can help them to be more understanding if you are having a tough time.”
- “Make yourself known to your loved one’s GP and make sure the practice has your contact details and remember to discuss your own needs.”



### Did you know?

1. Social interaction and activities can help the person with dementia to be more independent for longer and provide them with opportunities to share positive experiences.
2. Family and friends provide valuable links to the past. They enable a person with dementia to continue to be a loved and valued member of a family, community and circle of friends.
3. Local activities and support groups are available for carers and those they care for. These can open up new friendships for carers and their loved one.
4. The internet can be a great source of connecting to people if you cannot easily leave home. There are several online support groups for carers, and these can help you to link up with others going through similar experiences.



5. You can help your family, friends and wider community understand dementia. Be honest about dementia and be open to support.
6. Use your family, friends and community support as an opportunity for respite for yourself.
7. If you don't have a wide circle of support, check out the list of what's available in the community through your local Dementia Resource Centre, Carers Centre or by calling the Dementia Helpline. Tel: 0808 808 3000.

