

AlongNow

How to Accompany a Person With Mild Alzheimer's Disease

Professional Human Companionship • Educational Guide

People in the mild stage of Alzheimer's disease may still enjoy conversation, relationships, familiar activities, humor, music, walks, and meaningful participation. Companionship should protect dignity, autonomy, and safety while adapting to changes in memory and thinking.

Understand the Person, Not Just the Label

Mild Alzheimer's disease can involve difficulty remembering recent information, finding words, organizing tasks, navigating unfamiliar situations, or managing complex decisions. Abilities vary from person to person and from day to day.

Helpful Companion Practices

- Introduce yourself naturally and use the person's preferred name. Keep the tone adult and respectful.
- Use simple sentences and one topic or choice at a time. Give enough time for a response.
- Choose familiar, enjoyable activities and invite reminiscence without turning conversation into a memory test.
- Use gentle cues when needed; if a harmless detail is mistaken, prioritize connection over repeated correction.
- Follow the client's approved safety plan and involve the designated family/caregiver when required.

What to Avoid

- Do not quiz the person with "Don't you remember?" or argue over every mistaken detail.
- Do not infantilize, speak about the person as if absent, or make financial/medical/legal decisions for them.
- Do not leave a person alone when the agreed safety plan requires supervision.

A Helpful Phrase

"We can take our time. Would you like to look at these photos together or listen to some music you enjoy?"

Safety and Scope

AlongNow companionship is non-clinical. A companion should not diagnose, provide psychotherapy, prescribe or change medication, or replace professional medical or mental-health care. If the person appears to be in immediate danger, has suicidal thoughts, or may harm themselves or someone else,

contact appropriate emergency/crisis services. In the United States, call or text 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline; call 911 for an immediate life-threatening emergency.

Educational basis: National Institute of Mental Health guidance on depression, autism and ADHD; National Institute on Aging principles for dementia care and communication. This AlongNow guide is educational and is not medical advice.

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