

20 things NOT to say or do to a person with dementia

1. Don't say, 'but don't look or sound like you have dementia'
2. Don't tell us we are wrong
3. Don't argue with us or correct trivial things
4. Don't say 'remember when...'
5. Don't call us 'sufferers' or 'victims'
6. Don't refer to us as suffering, sufferers, demented, dementing illness, vacant dement, demented sufferer, an empty shell, fading away, disappearing, or that it is the longest goodbye, the saddest goodbye, stealing us away (we are always still here), afflicted
7. Don't say you are 'living with dementia' unless you are diagnosed with dementia
8. Don't remind us of the death of a loved one or pet
9. Don't blame the person for the changes in behaviour or personality
10. We have a form or type of dementia, not an 'affliction'
11. Don't call me honey, love or anything other than my preferred name
12. Don't refer to us as 'aggressives', 'wanderers', 'poor feeders', 'wetters', 'attention-seekers', 'non-communicators' or as 'obstructive' – we are still human beings
13. Don't assume because we can't tell you, your words or actions don't hurt our feelings
14. Don't assume I can't answer for myself
15. Don't talk about me to someone else, in front of me
16. Don't assume we can't communicate even if I we can't speak
17. Don't say, 'but I've just told you that' or 'you've asked me that already'
18. Don't think we can't feel pain, or have emotions
19. Don't assume we don't understand just because we are silent
20. Don't assume anything; it makes an ass out of u and me