

About Us

We are living well with dementia, and so can you.

We are a group of individuals with diverse backgrounds brought together through Alzheimer's Tennessee Memory Cafe and our shared experience of living with dementia. Our purpose for writing this pamphlet is to help others adjust to a diagnosis and ultimately to live with a better sense of well-being.

"Never, never, never give up."

— Doug B., diagnosed 4 years

"There are many blessings that come to us through this diagnosis, including wonderful people who are genuine and caring who come into our lives."

— Mike, diagnosed 12 years

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/LivingWell

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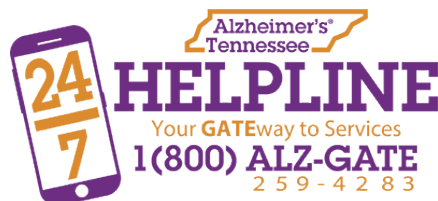
West Tennessee

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Resources

- **Memory Café**
Connect with others (virtually or in person) who have a diagnosis and are navigating life. Go to www.alzTennessee.org/MemoryCafe
- **Memory Café Act**
Enjoy social outings and explore with others who have a diagnosis. Care partners invited.
- **Live Well with Diagnosis Academy**
Hear from those who are living well with their diagnosis during a series of short 3 to 5-minute videos on topics like stress, how to talk about a diagnosis and more. Go to: www.alzTennessee.org/LiveWell
- **Enrichment Videos**
These videos feature experts sharing about topics all of us appreciate, from relaxation tips to music therapy to chair exercises. Visit www.alzTennessee.org/Enrichment
- **Research**
Learn about research advances and area clinical trials at www.alzTennessee.org/Research
- **MedicAlert Found**
Enroll with Alzheimer's Tennessee in a live 24-hour emergency response service designed for anyone who experiences a medical emergency, or who may wander and become lost. Learn more at www.alzTennessee.org/Found

Alzheimer's Tennessee, Inc. is the only local independent 501(c)3 not for profit organization based in Tennessee for families facing Alzheimer's since 1983.



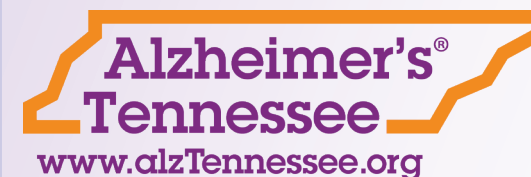
Diagnosed with Cognitive Impairment (Memory Loss)?

What you need to know...

**A pamphlet written by
Persons Living with Dementia**



"Stay positive and stay connected."
— Ed, diagnosed 4 years



Video links in this publication are from conversations with individuals diagnosed with Cognitive Impairment.

Find this pamphlet online at:
www.alzTennessee.org/WhatYouNeedtoKnow

**Alzheimer's: A Journey
No One Should Take Alone**

Feelings Experienced After Diagnosis

People often experience a **mixture of feelings and emotions** when they are initially told they have mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or dementia. These might include a sense of **disbelief**, feeling **overwhelmed**, or **fear** about possible consequences. But a diagnosis can also bring relief to finally understand the symptoms.

“The day I was diagnosed, I remember being flooded with emotions. In time, I found myself learning more about myself and the skills I needed to help me adjust.”

— Frank, diagnosed 11 years

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/Feelings

Coping with a Diagnosis

- Give yourself time to process the diagnosis.
- Try to identify the emotions you are feeling and share with someone you are comfortable confiding in.
- Connect with others living with dementia through local support groups.
- Empower yourself by taking responsibility for learning about your diagnosis to the degree you are able.

“We need words of encouragement. It’s ok to seek help from professionals like a psychiatrist to deal with the diagnosis.”

— Avi, diagnosed 6 years

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/Coping



Diversity of Symptoms

The experience of each person diagnosed with MCI or dementia is unique to each individual.

People diagnosed with cognitive impairment may notice a variety of symptoms such as :

- **Memory loss**
- **Difficulty with speech and word finding**
- **Trouble thinking, problem solving and multi-tasking**
- **Easily distracted and troubles completing tasks**
- **Movement, coordination and balance difficulties**

Note: The symptoms and the degree to which you experience them normally vary day to day.

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/Symptoms

“The medical field is making breakthroughs which is giving us a lot of hope.”

— Ken, diagnosed 7 years

Tips for Living Well with Dementia

- Mediterranean Diet
- Exercise
- Meditate/Observe Mindfulness/Prayer
- Minimize Stress
- Simplify your Life
- Practice Good Sleep Habits
- Create a safe living environment to minimize the risk of falls or injury.
- Surround yourself with supportive people.
- Learn about Community Resources
- Continue to engage in new activities and challenge yourself as you are able.

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/Tips

Stigma

Stigma is the negative feelings people may have toward a diagnosis of dementia. Stigma is often rooted in fear, a lack of understanding about a disease, or bad experiences.

“We all have challenges, it just means we need to pull together to get through.”

— Rudy, diagnosed 8 years

Strategies to Overcome Stigma

- **Educate** friends and family by first educating yourself.
- **Accept** that some people may need time to process and understand your diagnosis.
- **Forgive** others who may not be aware how their response to stigma might negatively effect you.
- **Have a sense of humor** and learn to laugh at your short comings when faced with stigma.

“I chose to combat stigma by making my diagnosis public and living my life fully in the face of Alzheimer’s Disease.”

— Brenda, diagnosed 7 years

VIDEO LINK:

www.alzTennessee.org/Stigma

Developed in Partnership with:

