

You can make their move *easier*

Edgewood Education - Memory Care

Receiving a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia is never easy – it's life changing for the individual affected as well as his or her family and friends. Making the decision to move a loved one to a memory care community can be especially difficult and overwhelming.

Below are some tips and information for communicating with a loved one about the impending move, how to prepare and what to bring.

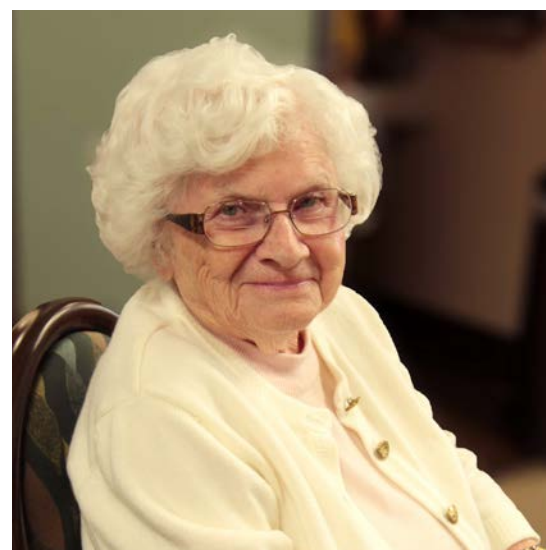
Any move is difficult. Remember that moving is difficult for anyone, whether you have dementia or not. It will take time for your loved one to adjust to his or her new surroundings and the temporary uneasiness he or she is feeling can cause anger and insecurity. Be patient with your loved one and plan ahead to help ease the transition.

Here are some items to ensure make the cut when choosing what your loved one should have in their new home:

- **Their place of comfort.** What is their place of comfort; where are they most content? It might be their favorite recliner, kitchen table or sewing machine. Take a picture of that place of comfort in their current home, then pick it all up and try to replicate it in their new memory care apartment. The things and places that bring them comfort are the things they've been using for a lifetime.
- **Their greatness.** What is your loved one's greatness; what has brought them great joy throughout their life? Was he an amazing golfer or did she bake the best pies in town? Knowing their greatness is a key component to helping create moments of joy for your loved one and ensuring they find comfort and familiarity in their new home.

They may not understand the words that come out of your mouth, but they might understand what you put in their hands. We need to give them their stuff back! - Jolene Brackey

- **Their bed and everything around it.** What kind of pillows do they sleep with; how many? What is their favorite blanket? What has to be on the night stand next to the bed; what side of the bed is it on? Their bed is a place of comfort, we have to make sure they feel like it's *their* bed, not someone else's bed with a new comforter and matching pillows to make their new room look prettier.



Most people don't like change, especially when it involves moving. It can cause anxiety and frustration for your loved one. Here's the reality though — your loved one's short term memory loss can actually work as a positive in this circumstance.

Deciding what to move with your loved one and what to leave behind can be a daunting task; here are some items to consider bringing along:

Clothing and personal items

- 5-8 pairs of their favorite clothing items (slacks, shirts/blouses, underwear, socks, etc.)
- 2-3 sweaters
- Bathrobe
- 2 pairs of slippers
- 2 pairs of comfortable shoes
- 1 lightweight jacket and 1 heavier coat
- Toiletries (brush/comb, toothbrush, favorite shampoo/perfume/

Items meant to spark old memories

They lose their short term memory, but retain many long term memories and we need to learn how to trigger those memories.

- Lots and lots of family photos
- Scrapbooks
- Favorite books
- Favorite music
- Things that remind them of "their greatness"

What NOT to bring

Remember the new memory care community will provide meals, housekeeping, laundry, activities, transportation, etc. - no need to pack the whole house! Also, remember that things get misplaced, especially in memory care, so don't bring priceless family heirlooms, expensive items or anything you wouldn't potentially want to share

Consider joining an Alzheimer's Support Group. Contact your local Edgewood community for more information.



Jolene Brackey, author of "Creating Moments of Joy", is an exciting national speaker who shares many warm, practical solutions to ease the daily struggles related to Alzheimer's and dementia.

For further resources and information you can visit her at enhancedmoments.com.

A daughter shared with me how her dad liked baseball caps, so she ordered a case full of his favorite team. Forty four baseball caps. When he passed away, she only found two. We looked at each other and said, "Forty two other people are enjoying

