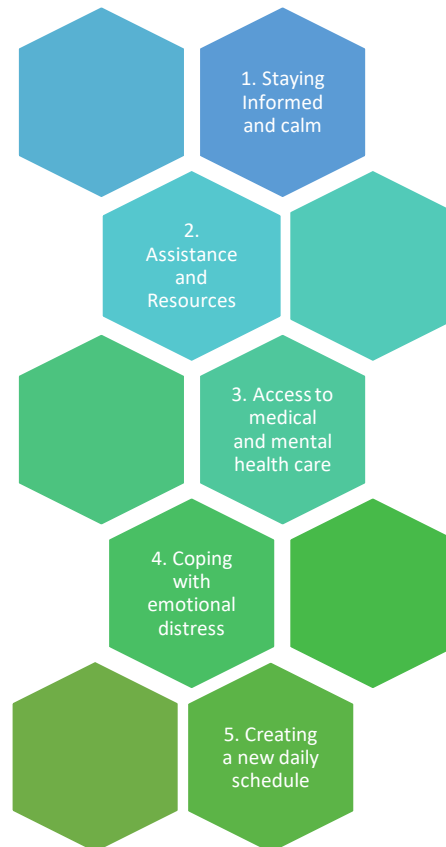


Maintaining Wellness for Dementia Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic - *A Comprehensive Resource List*



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Being a caregiver for a family member or friend who has dementia during the COVID-19 health crisis will undoubtedly add anxiety and additional burden into your daily life. Even during the most optimistic of times being a caregiver can be a stressful role, and those shouldering overwhelming responsibilities could slip into adopting a saturnine disposition and disconnect from healthy self-practices.

Over the long-term the lack of readily available tools to alleviate their impending stress levels and access to resources will manifest in collateral damage to your physical and physiological state, work productivity, social connectedness and ultimately psychological well-being.

It's of critical importance that you are now prioritizing your mental well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic so you can stay well after this acute crisis is over.

We present here, a comprehensive document of resources.

[PacificBrainHealth.org](https://www.PacificBrainHealth.org) | 310-582-7641

1. Staying informed and calm during COVID-19

During this public health crisis, we want you to feel confident that you have the tools and information to help you reduce the risk of exposure for yourself and those you care for in and out of your home. Our Center wants you to have information from trusted sources for you and your loved ones. Avoid sharing unconfirmed news about the infectious disease to avoid creating unnecessary fear and panic.

- A comprehensive guide of resources during COVID-19 pandemic for Older Adults, Family, Friends and Caregivers can be found on the **State of California Department of Aging website**, including links to the **CDC**, **WHO** and **CA Department of Public Health** for the most accurate and up-to-date information on the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Who Do I Want To Be during COVID-19?**
This diagram lays out the progression of how each of us may have started during this pandemic and where we hope to be now. This diagram was created by a psychologist, Dr. Ira Abrams.



2. Assistance and Resources during COVID-19

It is critical at this time that you have access to community resources to help support you and your loved ones during this public health crisis.

- **COVID-19 Information and Resource Phonenumber**

Phone number: 1-833-544-2374

This statewide hotline works in coordination with the non-profit local 2-1-1 systems, so that Californians have a one-stop shop to answer their questions and get assistance during this crisis. For example, the 2-1-1 system is able to help older Californians access grocery and medication delivery while staying at home. The state, in partnership with AARP, will also send a mailer to older residents, 65 and older, with useful resources and information to help adapt to the stay at home order.

- **2-1-1 CA- Connection to Local Services**

Call 211 for your county's local information hotline. 2-1-1 is a free information and referral service that connects people to health and human services in their community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Home delivery services.** For people needing home delivery service, they can **call 211** and follow the prompts to receive delivery at home. Wait time can be extremely long, but there is a call back option.
- **Food banks.** The LA Regional Food Bank still continues to provide for those in need. If you are in need of food assistance, please **call 211** or visit their [pantry locator](#)
- **Report hate crimes.** If you or someone you know experience a hate crime or the target of stigma during COVID-19, report it by **calling 211**. The LA County 211 phone line is open 24 hours, 7 days a week with trained Community Resource Advisors who can provide services in multiple languages.

Other local services include:

- **Grab-and-go meal services.** The City of Los Angeles is offering grab and go meal services where older adults can send their family members, friends, or caregivers. **Phone number: 1-213-482-7252**
- **Cal Fresh.** CalFresh helps people with low-incomes who meet federal eligibility rules buy healthy and nutritious food. **Phone number: 1-877-847-3663**

- **Alzheimer's Association**

Phone number (24/7): 1-800-272-3900, TDD: 1-866-403-3073

The Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline is available around the clock, 365 days a year. Through this free service, specialists and master's-level clinicians offer confidential support and information to people living with the disease, caregivers, families and the public. Helpful tips for dementia caregivers to stay safe and healthy during COVID-19 can also be found [here](#).

- **Alzheimer's Los Angeles**

Phone number/Helpline: 1-844-HELP-ALZ (1-844-435-7259)

Alzheimer's LA is offering personalized counselling and telephone support groups to provide caregivers with the emotional support and education they need to better

understand and manage Alzheimer's and other dementias. Monday – Friday from 9am – 4pm. For their upcoming virtual/telephone support groups and education programs, please visit [here](#).

- **Family Caregiver Alliance: National Center on Caregiving- Alzheimer's Disease and Caregiving**

- **Family Care Navigator.** Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA) seeks to improve the quality of life for caregivers through education, services, research, and advocacy. Through its National Center on Caregiving, FCA offers information on current social, public policy, and caregiving issues and provides assistance in the development of public and private programs for caregivers, as well as a toll-free call center for family caregivers and professionals nationwide.
- **LA Country Chapter/ USC Family Caregiver Support Center.** Every year, California's 11 nonprofit Caregiver Resource Centers (CRCs), serve more than 14,000 families and caregivers of adults affected by chronic and debilitating health conditions including dementia, Alzheimer's disease, cerebrovascular diseases (such as stroke or aneurysms), degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, Huntington's and multiple sclerosis, or traumatic brain injury (TBI), among many others. The centers listed below provide core services to families and caregivers ranging from counseling and care planning, to legal/financial consulting and respite, at low or no cost. **Phone number: 1-855-USC-6060 (1-855-872-6060)**

- **Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) COVID-19**

WDACS is providing services and resources for Older and Dependent Adults including:

- **Free meals.** For older adults age 60 and older who are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Call **1-800-510-2020** for assistance with meal services. Meals are provided either at distribution sites or via home-delivered meals.
- **Emergency food assistance.** Provided at 8 community and senior centers.
- **Elder Abuse.** If you are concerned that someone you care about may be the victim of elder or dependent adult abuse, don't be silent. Their Adult Protective Services team responds 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call the **Phone number: 1-877-477-3646** to report abuse.
- **Mediation Services.** WDACS partners with 9 agencies to provide mediation services to residents and businesses across the County. We are currently providing community and landlord-tenant mediation services. Mediation services at the courts are closed. To request mediation services the **Phone number is: 1-213-738-2621**. [Click Here](#) for a list of agencies and phone numbers.
- **Services for Native Americans.** Gabrieleno Tongva Tribal Council (1-626-286-1632), Pukuu Cultural Community Services (1-818-336-6105) and United American Indian Involvement (1-213-202-3970) provide services to alleviate poverty (i.e. emergency shelter, food, employment assistance etc.) in the Native American Indian Community. Pukuu Cultural Community Services is providing emergency services in direct response to the COVID-19 epidemic to eligible individuals including delivering groceries to homebound elders, providing food vouchers and rental assistance.

- **Alzheimer’s Association Alzheimer’s Navigator**
 When facing Alzheimer’s disease, there are a lot of things to consider. Alzheimer’s Navigator helps guide Caregivers to answers by creating a personalized action plan and linking you to information, support and local resources. View a [sample Action Plan](#).
- **Alzheimer’s Foundation of America- Caregiving Resources**
Toll-Free Helpline: 1-866-232-8484 (9 am-9 pm ET Monday-Friday, and 9 am-3 pm ET on Saturday and Sunday)
 AFA offers a variety of [educational materials](#) and [events](#) to help arm caregivers with tips and strategies to help facilitate meaningful living for both the caregiver and the individual living with dementia throughout their journey. A premier caregiving resource staffed by compassionate licensed social workers who are specifically trained in dementia care, AFA’s national toll-free helpline provides support, counsel, educational materials and referrals to local resources. AFA’s licensed social workers are also available via Skype (Alzheimers_Foundation), [live chat](#) and [e-mail](#).
- **Personal Assistance Services Council**
Phone Number: Toll-Free: (877) 565-4477
 The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program helps pay for services provided to low-income elderly, blind or disabled individuals to hire someone to help them with housework, meal preparation, and personal care. With help, individuals who receive IHSS can remain safely in their own home and do not need to move into a care facility or boarding home. Additional California COVID-19 resource links can be found [here](#). In partnership with Alzheimer’s LA they are also offering free telephone call **“Education on Brain Health, Caregiving and Dementia”** talks hosted by PASC. The monthly talks will be in English and in Spanish. RSVP by calling **1-626-737-7524**.
- **National Institute on Aging: Caregiver Information Site**
 Provides comprehensive information on how to respond to changes in communication and behavior, provide everyday care, and get help when needed.
- **American Association of Retired Persons**
 AARP has valuable resources for family caregivers, and tools to find or start a local mutual aid group during COVID-19.
- **Alzheimer’s Caregiving Tips by Alzheimer’s LA/Caregiving During COVID-19**
 Given the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, many families might be wondering what to do about having outside professional help come into their homes. We understand the challenge of trying to weigh the risk of having the help you need, versus the incredible demands of caregiving all by yourself.
 Here are some of the questions you might want to ask yourself if you are considering that difficult decision:

 - Does your loved one with dementia need personal care, such as help with dressing, bathing, and toileting?
 - Do you need some relief from providing all the personal care yourself?
 - Do you need some "time off?" Are you feeling stressed and overwhelmed?

- Do you have other close relatives or friends who have not been around other people and can help?
- Is your loved one in fairly good health otherwise?
- Is your loved one able to cooperate with the hygiene requirements of the coronavirus (washing hands for 20 seconds, coughing into elbow, etc.)?
- What extra precautions has the company your caregiver works for put into place to ensure workers are healthy?
- Does the professional caregiver know and follow the standards for providing hygienic care and preventing the spread of infection?
- Is the professional caregiver serving multiple clients?

What if your loved one with dementia is in a facility? Should you bring them home with you? Here are a few things to consider:

- Would you be able to provide all the care which is currently provided by three shifts of caregivers at the facility? For example, special meals, bathing, grooming, toileting, activities.
- Do you have family or friends that can help you and provide you with respite time/time off?
- Will your loved one be confused by the change in environment and routine? This can potentially cause very difficult behaviors
- Will you experience additional stress having your loved one home with you?
- Is the facility following the medical guidelines for infection control?
- Are you generally satisfied with the care that your loved one is receiving?

Your own well-being, mental and emotional health are key, especially now. If you need assistance, then don't hesitate to ask. And don't forget, be thoughtful and consistent with disinfecting and washing, and know that you are doing the best you can to keep yourself and your loved one with dementia safe.

3. Access to Medical and Mental Health Care during COVID-19

Older adults, especially in isolation and those with cognitive decline/dementia, may become more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated and withdrawn during the outbreak or while in quarantine. Access to practical and emotional support through informal networks (families) and health professionals is critical at this time. Online Support groups are designed to help people who are navigating their way through this disease while attending school, raising families of their own or developing careers. They will operate in a variety of time zones to help fit caregivers' busy schedules. If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others there are numerous resources to help you cope during this time and after the COVID-19 crisis has passed.

- **Pacific Neuroscience Institute/Pacific Brain Health Center**
Phone number: 310-582-7641

To comply with CDC recommendations on "social distancing", effective Monday March 16, 2020, PNI clinics will focus on seeing only those patients deemed urgent or semi-urgent. However, our physicians and clinicians, including Neurologist, Geriatric Psychiatrist, Geriatrician, Neuropsychologist, Dementia Care Nurse Practitioner and

Licensed Clinical Social Worker are currently offering TeleHealth/Virtual visits and support groups to provide services to patients and caregivers during the COVID-19 crisis.

- **California's first toll-free "warm line" for mental health support**

Phone number: 1-855-845-7415

California now has a warm line, which will be staffed by trained counselors during the hours listed below. Californians in need of mental health support or resources can call or text. The California Peer-Run Warm Line offers non-emergency emotional support and referrals to anyone in the state needing mental health help. The line is toll-free, and it will be staffed daily for most of the day. You can use it via telephone or instant messaging. Mondays to Fridays: 7 a.m. to 11 p.m, Saturdays: 7 a.m. to 3 p.m, Sundays: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

- **Hilarity for Charity**

Hilarity for Charity is a national non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness, inspiring change, and accelerating progress in Alzheimer's care, research, and support. They support and connect you with other caregivers who are also navigating their way through this disease. For more information about joining their support groups contact them on this [link](#) or email them at hangout@hilarityforcharity.org.

- **Mental Health America**

This website includes numerous "Do it Yourself" mental health screening assessments and educational information, including self-administered screenings for depression, anxiety and addiction symptoms to help you initially identify an emerging mental health concern.

- **SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline**

If you are experiencing distress due to the COVID-19 crisis you can call **Phone Number/Hotline: 1-800-985-5990**, or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

- **Alzheimer's Association's Caregiver Stress Check**

Provides a list of resources for ensuring you are attending to your stress levels and seeking out the appropriate ways to manage them.

- **ALZ connected**

ALZConnected is powered by the Alzheimer's Association, and is a free online community for everyone affected by Alzheimer's or another dementia, including: People with the disease, Caregivers, Family members, Friends and Individuals who have lost someone to Alzheimer's. The Alzheimer's Caregiver's Forum can be found [here](#).

- **PsyberGuide**

If you are interested in finding high quality mental health mobile applications you can use at home in your own time, but feeling overwhelmed by all the choices? PsyberGuide is a helpful non-profit site developed by UC Irvine professor Stephen Schueller, PhD, that provides expert reviews on mental health apps (both credibility and user experience) and offers solid recommendations.

4. Coping with Emotional Distress during COVID-19

As a caregiver, you may feel responsible for people's safety and care. But you also need to consider how you can best manage your own stress, to support and be supported by others in your life. Stress affects everyone and is an unavoidable yet sometimes necessary and adaptive response to what life throws at us. However, harmful stress, termed "distress," is when the stress presented exceeds our ability to cope and taxes our bodily systems causing physical and behavioral problems. Although there is no one-size-fits all approach to obtaining a balanced or even "stress-free" life as a caregiver there are some evidence-based tools and practices we can engage in as proactive means to defray what's coming at us. The best way to do so is by implementing your own "Self-Administered Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques (SMART)" to alleviate stress and related conditions such as depression, pain, and health. SMART include mind-body therapies, such as mindfulness and meditation, deep breathing, and mindful movement, as well as other modalities.

The following suggestions may be helpful in managing your stress. It is helpful to know a variety of relaxation techniques and tools which could be used as different strategies for different individuals and situations. Here are some actionable evidence-based techniques you can try adopting into their daily routine or when you find that you need to de-stress and induce a sense of calm during these tumultuous times. They include relaxation and cognitive techniques encompassed through the practices of:

Exercise

Breathwork

Mindfulness

Adequate Sleep

Socialization/Reducing Social Isolation

Cognitive Stimulation Activities

Exercise

One of the best recommendations for stress management is participating in regular physical activities that you enjoy doing. A large body of research reports that engaging in a regular exercise program reduces cortisol (a stress hormone) levels, reduce pro-inflammatory cytokines (signaling molecules that promote inflammation), reduce perceived stress and improves mood and decreases anxiety. Adhering to the Department of Health and Human Services guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate, aerobic exercise a week, ideally 30 minutes daily, has been shown to produce the most benefit for improving mood and reducing stress levels. If you are not currently meeting recommended guidelines a 2-4 week ramp up is suggested, where you increase the frequency and intensity by 5% each week, which will make it more comfortable for you to meet your physical activity goals. We suggest getting a physical activity tracker with a heart rate monitor.

Research has shown participating in exercise outdoors has shown a greater benefit than indoors, specifically finding a greater reduction in depression, anger, tension and increase feelings of revitalization and positive engagement, in addition to greater enjoyment and participation levels.

- Try a new fitness class video or mobile application at home. Many are offering free introduction memberships during COVID-19:
 - SilverSneakers OnDemand

- [YMCA 360](#)
 - [Spiro100](#)
 - [Mobility Matters](#)
 - [Tai Chi Daily Series](#)
 - [NIA Go 4 Life](#)
 - [Sit and Be Fit](#)
 - [ElderGym](#)
 - [Yoga with Adrienne](#)
- Track your physical activity to meet the daily physical activity guidelines
 - [Activity Planner \(Printable\)](#)
 - [FitBit](#)
 - Find a health coach who can work with you remotely to get you on-track to meet your individual health and wellness goals
 - [National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching](#)
 - [Functional Medicine Coaching Academy](#)

Breathwork

Practicing breathing techniques, such as triangle breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, diaphragmatic breathing, or guided imagery have shown efficacy in increasing the ability to respond to stress in one's daily life.

The Family Caregiver Alliance have created these free YouTube videos that focus on different relaxation techniques, they are:

- [Deep Breathing](#)
- [Triangle Breathing](#)
- [Muscle Relaxation](#)
- [Imagery Meditation](#)
- [Guided Imagery](#)
- [Mindfulness Meditation](#)
- [Breathing Mindfulness](#)

They also have these videos in:

- Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCcGMp5U39o&list=PLa1B8idpEiEoTvTGlyDq1pTW0blhTtcNj>
- Cantonese: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v78VotsJp18&list=PLa1B8idpEiEqPGNWTShaam18ca632ppjZ>

Mindfulness

Implementing a daily stress management habits, such as a mindfulness meditation practice will have a tremendous positive effect long-term. We recommend allocating at least 20 minutes daily (can be divided into morning and evening) and you can do them from the comfort of your own home. Mindfulness can be described as a way of training attention and fostering awareness. This can be done through a formal attention training program (mindfulness meditation) or the informal practice and application of being more attentive and engaged during daily activities. Reviews of the mindfulness literature converge in identifying the central outcome of mindfulness: improved self-regulation of thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physiological

reactions. Other great benefits of regular meditation include mental clarity and focus, improvement of memory, and overall higher level of mental performance. The more we can stay in the present — not bogged down in thoughts or reactivity — the more we are able to take life in stride.

Los Angeles-based meditation/mindful movement centers currently offering on-line classes:

- [InsightLA](#)
- [Tao of Wellness](#)

Mindfulness training has also now become available outside of conventional instructor led training settings and has been translated into home-based mobile applications which can be done anywhere and are low cost and simple to follow. Some mindfulness mobile health mobile phone applications (Apps) available include:

- [Headspace](#)
- [Waking Up](#)
- [Calm](#)
- [Simple Habit](#)
- [Mindfulness Coach](#)

Adequate sleep

Achieving better sleep can dramatically improve your health and wellbeing. Sleep reduces stress, prevents disease, improves your memory and mood, and much more; yet, roughly 70% of Americans are sleep deprived. When sleep quantity and quality are negatively affected, there are often dramatic consequences. We recommend the following guidelines for ensuring good sleep habits.

- Establish a consistent sleep schedule. Always wake up at the same time of day.
- Engage in a relaxing bedtime routine, including no TV or phones an hour before bedtime
- Set a bedtime that is early enough to get 8 hours of sleep
- Wear a sleep tracker (FitBit or [Oura Ring](#)) or keep a [sleep journal](#) to track your sleep habits
- Try to get outside within 15 minutes of waking up.
- Try not to nap longer than 45 minutes during the day
- Don't go to bed if you are not sleepy
- Don't eat a big meal or consume alcohol before bed. Don't eat 3 hours before going to bed.
- If sleep apnea is suspected, ask your doctor to refer you for a sleep study (which can be done at home).
- If you are suffering from insomnia try a free cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia app, such as CBT-i Coach, which was developed and researched by the VA.

Socialization/Reducing Social Isolation

Social isolation and loneliness place people at risk for the development of dementia. Prioritize social engagement and stay in touch with family members and friends. Seek out a social support network to stay healthy. Having a supportive social network is beneficial for managing stress, preventing disease, and even lengthening your lifespan. Research shows that

the development and maintenance of close bonds with friends, family, or social groups can provide a unique form of mental exercise and protect your brain from the amyloid proteins associated with Alzheimer's disease. Also it has been shown that people who feel they had good social support after a crisis cope better than those who feel they were not well supported.

- **Stay in regular contact with family and friends**

- Keep contact with family and friends through social messaging or through phone calls. Try social messaging Apps such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and video calls using FaceTime, Skype, Zoom or Google Hangouts. There is also a "senior-friendly" tablet called GrandPad for video calling and sharing photos.
 - [How to host a conference on Skype](#)
 - [How to host a conference on Facetime](#)
- Join community group or club and engage in online chat groups
- In crisis situations, a person's spiritual or religious beliefs may be very important in helping them through pain and suffering, providing meaning, and giving a sense of hope. Being able to pray and practice rituals can be a great comfort. Check the website of your local place of worship to see if they are currently offering services on-line.
- Accept help from family, friends, co-workers and clergy
- Reach out to neighbors and friends with special needs who may need your help
- If you know someone affected by the outbreak, call them to see how they are doing, and remember to keep their confidentiality
- Consider an act of kindness for those who have been asked to practice social distancing, such as having a meal delivered from their favorite restaurant

- **Participate in a Memory Café**

Café Connection Virtual Meeting is free for patients with dementia and their family. For more information and more Memory Café information, please visit this [link](#) and/or contact the facilitator listed below.

- **Hummingbird (Memory) Cafe Virtual Gathering**
The virtual café on Wednesdays will include singing, engaging in a Story Circle and if time allows, creating a group poem based on common themes of our stories. Whomever feels comfortable with this format is invited to attend. The Hummingbird (Memory) Café is for people with dementia and their care partners to gather and celebrate our humanity without the stigma of dementia.
Contact: Nicolette Ketchum hummingbirdmemorycafe@gmail.com.
- **Virtual Memory Café led by Won Haavisto**
They welcome to the cognitive engagement program even though patients are from other states. However, their organization, Creative Engagement Partners. Their target population are mild to moderate stage of dementia patients.
Contact: Won Haavisto wonhaavo@gmail.com
- **Memory Virtual Café led by Laurie Mantz**

Their attendees are mild to moderate levels of impairment. Occasionally they will have a more advanced person join them. These are for both the person diagnosed and their care partners. They don't get into diagnosis or traditional support group activities. They do exercise, games, art (as best they can from a distance), trivia, music etc. It is all about fun and learning to adapt and apply skills at home.

Anyone, from anywhere is welcome to join in. They meet 11:00 PST.

Contact: Laurie Mantz rimemorycafes@gmail.com

○ **Arthur's Memory Café led by Lori La Bey**

Open to anyone. They typically have people with early to mid dementia and their care partners, but at times they have had those diagnosed attend without a care partner (not everyone has a partner) as well as care partners who are unable to have their loved one attend. They meet the 2nd and 4th Wed of each month at 11am PST. They ask people to contact Lori so she can chat with them briefly and pass on the log in information. **Contact: Lori La Bey lori@alzheimersspeaks.com**

○ **Memory Virtual Café led by Cyndy Luzinski**

This group is for early to mid-stage people with dementia and their care partners. They focus the songs, games, and reminiscing around a theme each month. **Contact: Cyndy Luzinski dementiafriendsnoco@gmail.com**

○ **Memory Virtual Café Led by Rebecca Schochet**

2 hours every Tuesday. 1st hour is exercise and 2nd hour is usually different memory games. **Contact: Rebecca Schochet r.schochet@jfsclifton.org**

- The Hummingbird Project is implementing virtual and remote activity sessions to mitigate the negative impact of social isolation on older adults, especially for those with behavioral expression of unmet needs who are struggling. They are eager to use creativity to help support patients and/or loved ones and enhance quality of life during this difficult time.
 - Free Group sessions through Family Caregiver Alliance (Let's Get Away, Together! (A six-part armchair travel series for caregivers). For more information, please visit [here](#).
 - 1:1 virtual recreational therapy by one of their activity specialists - \$95 for an hour session, \$50 for 30 minutes session. To initiate 1:1 service, contact Tiffany Paige tpaigeramirez@sageeldercare.com or 916-990-7944

Cognitive Stimulation Activities

Just like your body requires physical exercise, your brain needs mental exercise to stay healthy. Not all mental effort is created equally. Prioritize mental activities that support learning and brain health and decrease activities that contribute to mental exhaustion. Healthy mental stimulation is often called cognitive training or "brain training." Brain training might involve computerized cognitive tasks, compensatory strategies training, learning a new skill (such as learning to use a new technology or language), and engaging in healthy leisure activities like reading a book or writing in a journal.

There are several ways to engage in distance and on-line learning including through a: Laptop or desktop computer with internet connection, smartphone or tablet, or dial-in phone call.

- Try Brain Training Games
 - [Brain HQ](#)
 - [CogniFit](#)
 - [Dakim Brain Fitness](#)
- Learn a New Language
 - [Duolingo](#)
 - [Babbel](#)
 - [Memrise](#)
- Live Webinars/Online Education Programs
 - [Alzheimer's Association Webinar](#)
 - [UCLA Health Webinar](#)
 - [UCLA Senior Scholars](#)
- Attend a virtual concert
 - [NPR link](#)
- Join a virtual signing group
 - [Music Mends Minds](#) offers free global sing-a-longs during COVID-19 on Zoom on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 1pm-1:45pm
- Engage in a multi-modal exercise and cognitive training activities
 - [MindMate](#)
 - [Neuro Rehab Apps and Games](#)
- An excellent comprehensive resource guide to promoting mental stimulation during COVID-19 was curated by HomeCare Assistance and can be found [here](#).

Gift Basket of Self-Care for You

This Gift Basket has tips on Self-Care during pandemic. It was created by Dr. Denise Morita, Clinical Psychologist and can be included in your daily routine to add variety and happiness to brighten your day and ensure you are attending to your important needs to get through this challenging time.

Gift Basket of Self Care

Know that you are receiving this because I care greatly about you and feel your well-being is important!

I hope you will allow yourself to use everything in this basket so you can be as healthy as possible during this difficult period.

1. *Think about treating yourself as you would a best friend or someone you love with all your heart.*
2. *Allow yourself peace at the beginning and end of each day – Make the period after you wake up until after you finished breakfast a time to adjust and center yourself, and do the*

- same at least a ½ hour before bedtime. That means keeping your TV, computer, and phone off (for news purposes) and refraining from listening to or viewing the news.
3. *Maintain a good sleep routine, going to bed and waking up at approximately the same time each day (+ or – ½ hour). If you are having trouble falling asleep, get up after a ½ hour and do something without screen use like reading or meditating (The blue light from screens promotes wakefulness). Then, once you are more relaxed and have cleared your head, try going to bed again.*
 4. *Eat nourishing food that supplies you with energy (especially at breakfast). Try not to eat to alleviate your stress and anxiety, it is only a temporary Band-Aid.*
 5. *Stay hydrated.*
 6. *Take mini breaks across the day to take 10 low-slow-deep breaths, or meditate. Meditation apps you can check out include:*
 - *Calm*
 - *Insight Timer*
 - *My Headspace*
 7. *Try to structure your day so you are not free-floating.*
 8. *Keep mealtime a news-free time and limit the amount of time you watch the news throughout the day.*
 9. *Exercise or move around. It is a great stress-buster! There are many free programs and classes online via YouTube, and other sites. This might be a time for you to try something that previously may have made you feel too self-conscious to try with other people in the room, like salsa dancing. Taking a walk when it is nice outside gives you the added benefit of getting fresh air and checking out how Spring is developing.*
 10. *If you are with your family, take some time for yourself to read or indulge in a hobby.*
 11. *As a family or couple, take time to play a game or watch a fun program together.*
 12. *Connect with others. It can be via social media, a telephone call, sending a letter, or checking in with a neighbor with at least six feet of distance between you.*
 13. *Limit the time you spend talking to people who drain you of your emotional and mental resources. It is likely that they need more than you can give, and what you have to say will not fix what is driving their thirst for “more”.*
 14. *Do something that has a start and an end to it, like a chore. Don’t make the task too grand, like cleaning out your garage if you haven’t touched it in years, but something manageable within a designated time period. If you were to chip away at the garage, you may want to break down this daunting task into doable parts, like one grocery bag of sorting per day. The idea is to feel a sense of accomplishment.*
 15. *You might want to “shop around”, as if you were shopping in a store and trying things on for size, for things that interest or relax you. For example, try learning a language on Duolingo or try an online game like Wordscapes. If you don’t like it after a trial period, stop, and try something else.*
 16. *Check in with yourself daily and notice how you are feeling. Everyone is feeling more stressed and anxious. This is normal. Be mindful of how you handle these emotions, being careful not to snap at the people around you.*
 17. *Most importantly, cut yourself some slack. There is no such thing as perfection, and you will not have all the control you wish you could have by trying harder; it’s a pandemic. Doing the best you can is absolutely the best you can do!*

5. Create a New Daily Schedule during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 Shelter in Place order, older adults are being asked to stay in doors to lower risk of exposure. Many things are changing fast and we are being forced to adapt quickly. Staying home might be easier said than done. A main source of stress for caregivers is day-to-day strain of everyday responsibilities, which are particularly heightened during a crisis. Long hours of direct caregiving, overwhelming responsibilities, lack of a clear schedule, strained communication with the person you are caring for, are examples of caregiving stress that can affect helpers.

To help organize your days Alzheimer's Los Angeles have developed a list of activities to do at home with someone who has a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, regardless of their stage in this journey.

Changes in routine can cause confusion and agitation for people with Alzheimer's Disease. The list below can help you create a new “regular” routine as it is encouraged that you keep regular routines or help create new ones in a new environment. Hopefully, this can provide ideas on how to fill your days.

When creating a new routine for yourselves at home, keep in mind that it is difficult for people at any stage of the disease to adapt to change, especially to a sudden change in routine. Choose activities that you can both enjoy together, create a schedule, test it out, then modify as needed. Having a set routine can help give the person with a diagnosis some order and control to their day.

When creating or choosing an activity it is important to keep three things in mind:

1. It should reflect their likes and interests
2. It should be set up in a way that matches their abilities and instructions should also be given in a way that matches abilities
3. Be flexible, attention span might be decreased, it is okay if you need to move on to another activity

Listed here are sample daily schedules developed by Alzheimer's Los Angeles that work for the various dementia stages of your loved ones, which incorporates many of the coping strategies listed above.

Early Stage

- **Stay connected**

Staying connected with friends and family is important and can be easy with all the available technology.

1. Call or FaceTime with a friend. Set up a time during your day when you will call or FaceTime a friend. It can be a different person every day.
2. Find a way to play a game with a friend online. Set up a time to play a game with friends or family where you all log on at the time and play together for a little while.
3. Host a virtual tea time, coffee time or happy hour. Invite people to FaceTime with you and enjoy tea, coffee or their favorite cocktail.
4. Host your own cooking show. Set up a time, maybe right before dinner, to cook your own meal while demonstrating how to make a family recipe. Connect on FaceTime so they can see what you are doing.
5. Write an actual letter or thank you note and send it to a friend or family member.

6. Connect with your grandchildren by becoming their pen pal, send them a letter, tell them about your day, and ask them to share the same with you.
- Write, write, write
Now might be a good time to write some things that will help you privately reflect or share your story with others.
 1. Start a journal. Make time every morning or evening to write down your intentions for the day, how you felt that day and one or two things you particularly enjoyed. A quick short entry will do.
 2. Make a family cookbook. Collect all your family recipes, and put them together in one book.
 3. Make a list of things for which you are grateful at the end of the day, review and add to it every night. Share it with your family via email.
 4. Record or write down your stories then share with your grandchildren or family via email.
 - Time to reflect
A change in our routine can cause feelings of anxiety. Setting aside time to reflect and focus on our feelings can help calm some of our anxiety.
 1. Meditate. There are many apps or YouTube posts to help you start your meditation practice.
 2. Do a guided imagery session, which can be a very relaxing to start or end your day.
 3. Need to let go of difficult or anxious thoughts? Try this website, <https://thought-detox.glitch.me/> where you type in your thought and “release it”.
 4. Color. Coloring can be very relaxing, if you don't already have an adult coloring book at home, or art supplies to do your own paintings, download *Lake: Coloring Books* on your smart phone or tablet.
 5. Yoga for Anxiety. Check out this 20 minute yoga video. Be mindful of your body and only do what you can. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJJWArRfKa0>
 6. Videos to Help You Relax. Put on one of the videos in the link while you are writing your letter to a friend or family or while you are working on a puzzle together, <https://advice.shinetext.com/articles/8-videos-that-bring-a-nature-break-to-your-desk/>
 7. Check out this website, which offers a lot of resources to help you cope with anxiety associated with COVID-19. <https://www.virusanxiety.com/>
 - Entertainment at home
 1. YouTube has some amazing things to offer. Check out this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXqQ_hKIyTc
 2. Go to a museum! From the comfort of your own home <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>
 3. Pick a binge worthy show that friends or family have been recommending and only watch one episode a day. Pick two shows, one for the morning and another to watch together in the evening.
 4. Work on a puzzle together. Work on the puzzle a little each day, take a picture and share with friends.

5. Listen to a podcast together. There are great podcast with short episodes that you can listen to together and then discuss. Try “The Moth” www.themoth.org.
 6. If you know how to play an instrument, dust it off and practice. Maybe you can perform for your family on FaceTime. Or join a free Music Mends Minds Zoom singing group session <https://www.musicmendsminds.org/covid-19-response>
- Around the house
 1. Finish that project you started and never got around to finishing.
 2. Start an herb garden.
 3. Organize a room or space in your home that you have been avoiding. Work on it a little each day.
 4. Organize your photo albums or work on finishing them.
 5. Try a new recipe together, if you have all the ingredients in your pantry or fridge.
 6. Look through photos together. This is a good time to reminisce about old memories together. Pick the best picture and mail it to a friend or family with a little description.
 7. If the weather permits, work on your garden. Fresh air and some sun can feel really nice.
 8. Work on a family tree.
 - Stay Healthy and Active
 1. If you can, go for a walk around your block. If you have pets, take them out for a walk. They will appreciate you for it.
 2. Do a work-out at home. Set up a time in your day to do a quick work-out at home. Here is a good 20-minute chair exercise.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azv8eJgoGLk&feature=youtu.be>
 3. Have a dance party in your living room or if you are brave enough, in your driveway. Connect to FaceTime and invite your friends or family to dance with you.

Middle Stage

- Cognitive Stimulation
 1. Name the presidents
 2. Remember famous people
 3. Look at pictures together and talk about those memories
 4. Read or write a poem together
 5. Talk about great inventions
 6. Work on a puzzle
 7. Write a letter to a friend or family member
 8. Talk about your first car
- Care for Your Animals
 1. Mindfully pet your animal companion
 2. Go out for a walk with your dog
 3. Make a bird feeder together
 4. Talk about your first pet or your favorite pet
- Garden
 1. Plant seeds together

2. Start an herb garden
 3. Tend to your garden
 4. Sit outside and enjoy your garden and some fresh air
 5. Take a walk around the block
- Conversation Ideas
 1. Talk about your favorite family memories, traditions or vacations.
 2. Look at pictures together and talk about them.
 3. Reminisce about favorite sports enjoyed when growing up.
 4. Talk about favorite spring or summer activities.
 5. Make a list of things you want to enjoy once the quarantine is over.
 - Exercise, Games and Music
 1. Play a board game together
 2. Play dominos
 3. Work on a big puzzle together
 4. Play an easy card game like 'go fish'
 5. Have a dance party
 6. Listen to music together
 7. Sing old songs together
 8. Play your instrument if you know how. This is a great time to practice!
 9. Do a simple chair exercise like this one,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azv8eJgoGLk&feature=youtu.be>
 - Around the House
 1. Help clean-up
 2. Help set the table for meals.
 3. Help fold laundry
 4. Wash the windows
 5. Organize the closet you have been avoiding
 - Arts
 1. Adult coloring book, if you don't have one download one on your smart phone or tablet
(*Lake: Coloring Books*)
 2. Cut pictures out of old magazines, make a collage and send it to family or friend.
 3. Go to the museum! Virtually <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

Late Stages

Try incorporating any or all of these various home-based activities that may work best for you and your loved one to stay connected and stimulated.

1. Listen to music together.
2. Paint, give the person with a diagnosis a blank piece of paper with some materials (watercolors, markers, crayons, pencils, or whatever you can find). Discuss a past

memory and then have them draw it freely. If they need inspiration find a simple image of a flower, nature, or animal and have them replicate it.

3. Toss a ball
4. Make a scrap book, cut out pictures from old magazines and put things together on a page or simply talk about the pictures you picked.
5. Take a walk around the yard or block
6. Sweep the patio or driveway
7. Fold towels or the laundry
8. Sing favorite songs
9. Bake cupcakes or cookies and decorate them
10. Look at family pictures together and talk about memories that come up for either one of you.
11. Connect with a friend or family member via FaceTime so you can see them.
12. Water house or yard plants
13. Dance or listen to fun or favorite music together. Put on some music that you or the person with a diagnosis listened to in your younger years and encourage them to dance or sing with you. This is a great exercise for the both of you!
14. Cook a favorite family recipe together
15. Sort playing cards, buttons or coins
16. Make popcorn and enjoy it together
17. Put a puzzle together
18. Create a memory box-Fill a box with things they used in a past hobby, career, or meaningful items (like pencils, pieces of fabric, a hammer, pictures, measuring spoons, a whisk, or sandpaper). Then have them pull items from the box and share stories about each.
19. Untie knots - Find scraps of fabric, medium-thickness rope, or yarn and loosely tie a few knots. Then ask your loved one to help you untie them.
20. Involve the person with a diagnosis in housework. Depending on their abilities and familiarity with the type of activity, you may ask them to help in various tasks: folding clothes, matching socks, putting dishes away or washing dishes, sweeping, making beds, or dusting.
21. We know being a caregiver can be tough, but you don't have to face it alone.