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• Providing support by telephone or email, or through a support group.
• Locating services for you in your community.

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Step 2 Recognize that you are going through a variety of emotions
You may respond to the news of the diagnosis and the changes caused by dementia with a variety of emotions. You might feel angry, embarrassed, frustrated, afraid or sad. These emotions and more are normal and may come and go.

Let those close to you know how you are feeling. Your family and friends may also be experiencing the same types of emotions. Sometimes, people with dementia feel sad or depressed. If your feelings are overwhelming and won’t go away, talk to your doctor.

Step 3 Learn about dementia
Find out what you can about dementia and how it will progress. Learn about tips and strategies that might help you day to day. The Alzheimer Society has many useful resources to help people with dementia, such as our “Shared Experiences” booklet, our website (alzheimer.ca) and support groups.

Step 4 Tell people
If possible, let the people closest to you know that you are living with dementia. Explain what dementia is and how it is affecting you. Sharing this information will help them understand that the difficulties you are experiencing are a result of dementia. Sharing this information will also allow you to tell them how they might be able to support you.

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While there is no cure for dementia, medications may help with managing some of the symptoms. Read about the treatments that are available. Discuss their risks and benefits with your doctor. You may wish to participate in a research study. Your local Alzheimer Society will have information on treatment options and research studies in your area.

Step 6 Focus on what you can do – and on what you enjoy doing
• Adapt your interests and abilities.
• Pursue a hobby you enjoy or listen to your favourite songs.
• Find ways that help you cope with the changes. For example, write down important things in a memory book, smartphone or tablet.

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Find people you are comfortable with to share your feelings and emotions. It may be a member of your family, a good friend, another person with dementia, a therapist or an Alzheimer Society support group. No matter who it is, the important thing is to share your experiences and how you are feeling. Some people also find it helpful to write their thoughts, feelings and experiences in a journal.

• Whenever possible, simplify your life.
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Suggestions from people with dementia
People who have dementia say you should:
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• Try not to be hard on yourself
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- Offers information, support and education programs for people with dementia, their families and caregivers
- Funds research to find a cure and improve the care of people with dementia
- Promotes public education and awareness of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias to ensure people know where to turn for help
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This resource is informed by research and the experiences of a person living with dementia. We thank Mario Gregorio, a person living with dementia, for his generous contribution to the development of this resource.
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