

5 TIPS for caregivers

READING RECOMMENDATIONS

As summertime approaches, many of us reach for our favorite beach reads, looking forward to a few hours relaxing. However, as a caregiver for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia, those relaxing moments can be few and far between – and the few you have, that time is valuable! If you're looking to make the most of your summer reading list, here are a few recommendations for books, novels, and guides to help.

1 Creating Moments of Joy

By Jolene Brackey

Knowing that positive feelings linger long after the memory is gone for an individual with Alzheimer's disease, Brackey encourages caregivers to focus on creating moments of joy. Each day and each memory is made up of moments. So while it may not be possible to create the perfect day for someone with dementia, it is much more attainable to focus on creating a perfectly wonderful moment. This journal for caregivers not only helps the caregiver better understand their loved one, but also provides practical tips for communication and creating these moments of joy in a variety of situations.

2 Learning to Speak Alzheimer's

By Joanne Koenig Coste

By emphasizing relating to individuals with dementia in their own reality, Coste offers a practical approach for caregivers, helping both the care giver and receiver! Her method, 'habilitation,' works to enhance communication between the caregiver and patient, and can revolutionize the way we live with Alzheimer's. Coste offers many practical tips for how to cope with the diagnosis and adjust with disease progression, how to talk with the patient about the diagnosis, how to deal with driving, how to make meals and bath time more comfortable, how to adjust room design, and how to deal with difficult behaviors.

3 Slow Dancing with a Stranger

By Meryl Comer

The personal story of Emmy-award winning journalist Meryl Comer's husband's battle with Alzheimer's disease, Comer puts a face to a widely misunderstood disease. Her husband, Dr. Harvey Galnick began forgetting routine things, and abruptly changed behavior. Doctors were stumped, and after an array of suspicions, he was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's disease. She continues the story of how she gave the next 20 years to caring for him, a man that eventually became an emotionally distant stranger. He was "not the man I fell in love with and married," Comer writes. She chronicles her personal experiences from the mistakes to the

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minor victories, detailing the realities of living with Alzheimer's disease while also advocating for more intensive research and the need to prepare for the future of this health crisis.

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4 Still Alice

By Lisa Genova

A New York Times bestselling novel, *Still Alice* is the story of an accomplished professor who is diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's disease. At just 50 years old, she is a cognitive psychology professor at Harvard, a world-renowned expert in linguistics, and has a successful husband and three grown children. Her diagnosis changes all of that. *Still Alice* is a moving and vivid depiction of life with early-onset Alzheimer's disease and how relationships are changed as Alice learns that her worth is more than just her ability to remember.

5 The 36-Hour Day

By Nancy L. Mace, MA and Peter V. Rabins, MD, MPH

Often lauded as the bible for families affected by memory impairments, *The 36-Hour Day* is a comprehensive guide to help families through this difficult time. This guide covers dementia basics; how to deal with problems arising in daily care, such as meals, exercise, personal hygiene, and safety; how to cope with the diagnosed individual's troublesome behaviors, such as false ideas, suspicion, anger, or other mood problems; how to get extra support in the community; and financial and legal issues to address. Additionally, it also includes information on causes of dementia, managing the early stages, prevention, and appropriate settings when home is no longer an option.



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