

# Memory Care Assisted Living Communities – the Answer to “I can’t Do This Anymore”

By Mitchell Leichter

“I Can’t Do This Any More!” These are the six hardest words a person caring for their loved one with dementia can ever think or say to them self or out loud to another. No one wants to give up on the personal care of a loved one to whom they are devoted. However, with dementia this time may come for any spouse, child or other caregiver. Long term personal care can become overwhelming to the point of physical and/or emotional exhaustion.

As memory loss increases, greater is the

need for care. A normal, active person becomes confused and agitated. This expresses itself in depression and/or anger. Help or instruction will be refused or denied. Irresponsible management of money or belongings may cause struggles. Behavioral problems can arise. Lack of inhibition and improper responses may occur. Incontinence and the need for pads or diapers may be met with resistance. Bathing and hygiene become a war. Social activities with family and friends become unwanted. Wandering becomes a real dan-

ger requiring containment and lots of supervision. Afternoon to evening agitation begins. Sleep at night shortens so that there is night time wandering and early morning rising. Disinterest in eating can occur. In mid stage dementia a person may so cling to their caregiver that they cannot even go into the bathroom without bringing their charge with them. Add this and more to a normal list of aging concerns, and one can see what an overwhelming responsibility care giving can become!

The good news is that there is help! There are now Memory Care Assisted Living Communities that totally specialize in the care of persons with dementia. The entire staff is trained in the care required for every stage of memory loss. Health supervision is administered by a Wellness Nurse. Activities are also specialized, providing mental, physical and emotional stimulation all day, every day. These large facilities also provide social interaction and a variety of entertainment. Care extended into Hospice and end of life allows most resi-

dents to stay in one place once admitted. Family visits are as often as desired. Communication with staff is encouraged. Support groups for the family are sometimes available as well.

Be prepared if you think that these words, “I Can’t Do This Any More!” are likely to be yours. Visit the Memory Care Communities near you to discover all the good help available to you. You will be surprised to find that your loved one may be given greater care 24 hours each day, and more stimulation and supervision than you can provide. Most important, once your loved one is in an all memory care community, you can visit as much as you want, sleep through your nights and choose activities for you again, knowing that all is well for both of you!

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