



# Welcome

## Dementia Friends Information Session

# Introduction

# I am...



- Care Manager for Home Instead Senior Care – dementia specialist home care provider
- volunteer for Dementia Champion, enthusiastic about the programme
- completed training to be a Dementia Champion

# I am not...

- medical expert in dementia
- a counsellor to provide counselling



### **Housekeeping**

- Fire safety procedure
- Toilets

### **Brief session outline**

- The session will last 45 – 60 minutes
- It will include some activities but no breaks
- You will be asked to turn your understanding into action – to be a Dementia Friend

# What is Dementia Friends?

## - brief overview



- A social action movement – to increase understanding and inspire people to take action
- Funded by the Department of Health for England and the Cabinet Office
- Led by Alzheimer's Society as a strand of its work to create Dementia Friendly Communities
- Target to reach one million Dementia Friends by 2015

# Five key messages

# Bingo!

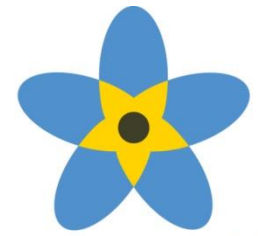
# 1. \*Dementia is not a natural part of **ageing**.



Q: What do we mean by this?

A: Not everyone who grows old will develop dementia. Not everyone who develops dementia is old - people as young as 30 have been diagnosed with dementia.

## 2. \*Dementia is caused by **diseases** of the brain



Dementia  
Friends

Explanation: In the same way that any other organ can fail (kidney failure, liver failure) dementia is caused when diseases physically damage the brain.

Imagine that the brain is a collection of thousands of fairy lights, each representing a memory, a skill or a function of the brain.

Now imagine that dementia is causing some of those lights to flicker, dim or switch off completely. For each person this will happen in a different order and different "lights" will be affected

### 3. One common type of dementia is **Alzheimer's** disease.



Q: What do we think the difference is between Alzheimer's and dementia? A: Alzheimer's is one type or cause of dementia. Q: Can you think of any others? A: Vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy Bodies, Fronto-temporal dementia

## 4. Alzheimer's disease usually starts by affecting people's **short term memory**.



Explanation: Short term memory loss is the sign most frequently associated with Alzheimer's disease and the one that may prompt someone to go see their GP and get a diagnosis.

Q: Why do you think someone who is worried about their memory wouldn't go to see a doctor?

A: Fear, stigma – That's exactly what Dementia Friends is all about, getting people to talk about dementia and so reducing that fear and stigma

## 5. \*Dementia is not just about **losing your memory**.



Dementia  
Friends

- Q: Thinking back to the fairy lights from earlier - what other functions does the brain control that could be affected by dementia?

A: Possible examples:

- *Communication* – forgetting words or using the wrong words e.g. calling a dog a horse
- *Motor skills* – being able to use a knife and fork
- *Sequencing* – difficulties with performing a task e.g. putting on two jumpers but no skirt
- *Changes in inhibition* – e.g. used to be a very quiet shy person, now outgoing and uninhibited
- *Vision* – e.g. judging distances

## 6. Dementia can also affect people's **perception.**



Examples:

- Shiny floors may look wet
- Patterns of fruit on a tablecloth may look real and someone may reach for a piece of fruit.
- A swirly carpet may look like snakes

7. Dementia is **progressive**, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse.

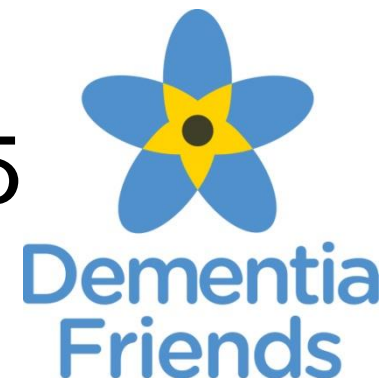


All kinds of dementia are progressive, though they may have different progressions. For example, Alzheimer's has a gradual progression, whereas Vascular dementia has more of a step-like progression.

Q: Why would it be useful to know which type of dementia someone has?

A: Knowing what kind of dementia a person has may help you better support them

8. One in **fourteen** people over 65 have dementia at any one time.



By 2015 there will be **850,000 people** with dementia in the UK

Although you can't see dementia, it's more prevalent than you might think.

This is why it's so important that we create Dementia Friends. Nearly everyone in our society will know someone affected by dementia, so understanding the disease and supporting those living with it is important to everyone.

## 9. Dementia affects each person in **different** ways.



Q: What factors will determine the way dementia affects someone?

A: The type of dementia, the order in which their "fairy lights" are affected, their environment, their life experience, their diet, etc.

If you've met one person with dementia, you've met one person with dementia!

# 10. \*It is possible to **live well** with dementia.



This is one of the key messages we want Dementia Friends to learn. People with dementia may still be able to work, drive, have relationships. What they can do and how long they can do it for will depend on their particular circumstances.

Living well will mean different things for different people. We're not saying that dementia doesn't bring challenges, but despite these challenges it is still possible to live well with dementia.

Q: What does someone need in order to live well with dementia? A: Support and understanding

# 11. \*There is **more** to the person than the dementia



In the same way that we would look at someone with cancer or diabetes and see a person first, there is more to a person than the dementia. Q: What else might a person with dementia have? A: Red hair, a broken leg, a great singing voice, a past as an astronaut, a personality, good sense of humour.

# 11. \*There is **more** to the person than the dementia



A care home in the North East had an elderly resident with dementia who constantly tapped her fingers on every surface...

## 12. Dementia Friends is about turning understanding into **action**



You can think about what you can do differently in your day-to-day life that may help people living with dementia.

Here are some examples of actions other have committed to:

- If the person ahead of you in a supermarket is struggling, be patient, don't tut.
- Post on Facebook that you have become a Dementia Friend and encourage others to attend a session
- Some journalists committed to never using the term "dementia sufferer" in their press again, a small change for them but huge for us!

# Five things everyone should know about dementia



- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing
- Dementia is caused by brain diseases
- It's not just about losing your memory
- It's possible to live well with dementia
- There's more to the person than the dementia

# Bookcase analogy

# How does dementia affect me?



Imagine that I am an 80 year old woman/man living with dementia :

- There is a full bookcase beside me, as tall as me
- Each book represents a memory or a skill
  - My top shelf holds very recent books (breakfast this morning)
  - By my shoulders are books from my 60's (retirement party)
  - By my knees are books from my 20's (getting married)
  - By my feet are books from my childhood (going to school)
- Dementia rocks my bookcase side to side and my books start to fall off, top shelf first
- As dementia progresses my upper shelves will empty, so what I think of as my most recent memories will come from further down the bookcase

# How does dementia affect me?



## Example

If the only books that are still firm in my bookcase are from lower down in my 20's, I might find myself living in the 1950's.

Q: What is different in my kitchen?

(Layout, microwave, dish washer, kettle would be electric)

Q: I fill the kettle, then what might I do?

(Put it on the hob)

Q: What might you (as my carer or loved one) be tempted to do? (Stop me making tea)

Q: What could you do instead? (Switch my kettle for a whistle one)

# Different parts of the brain are affected differently



## Factual part (Hippocampus)

- Manages factual and biographical data (faces, names, dates, numbers)
- Picture a bookcase made from plywood, poorly constructed
- Dementia will make it move a lot, books will fall out easily

# Different parts of the brain are affected differently



## Emotional part (Amygdala)

- Manages emotions and feelings – the things that make me who I am
- Picture a bookcase made from solid oak (show this on the other side of you)
- It is more resistant to dementia so contents will be safe from dementia for longer

# Different parts of the brain are affected differently



For every book on my factual bookcase there will be a corresponding book on my emotional bookcase.

For example:

- In the factual bookcase, I have a memory of the teacher I had in school
- In the emotional bookcase, I have the feeling of inspiration when he taught me

# Different parts of the brain are affected differently



Examples:

- 1) You come to visit me and we have a huge row.
- 2) You come to visit me on a different day and we have a lovely time, we go to the seaside and have ice cream.

# Five things everyone should know about dementia



- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing
- Dementia is caused by brain diseases
- It's not just about losing your memory
- It's possible to live well with dementia
- There's more to the person than the dementia

# Whose right?

## Summary:

Every person is a **unique individual** and will experience their dementia in their **own unique way**. Some people will still have abilities and capacity that others may have lost sooner.

By **assuming a person cannot do something** can mean that we increase the experience of disability, however well meaning, doing for instead of doing with will **undermine** a person and could cause **frustration**.

With the **right support and understanding**, people can **live well with dementia** and still contribute to their local community. Only by raising our own level of understanding and awareness, can we make a positive difference.



# Introduction to becoming a Dementia Friend..





What does dementia friendly mean to you?"

# Turning understanding into action



- Say 'living with dementia'
- Visit friends or relatives living with dementia
- Encourage others to become Dementia Friends
- Offer to help someone find the right bus
- Volunteer for a local organisation supporting people with dementia



Do you want to be a  
Dementia Friend?



**Thank you**  
and next steps