

A Day for Both of You
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Your spouse has memory difficulties. It may be Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia. You just know that you need some time for yourself. You feel "attached at the hip" and are feeling burdened, tired, and angry. There is little he can do on his own. What can you do?

Hire someone to come in and take your place and take over.
Set the tone for the day.

Know that this day/time every week, the schedule will be the same. Plan 3-4 hours for both of you.

Another person arrives to take over the responsibility.

1. The spouse or caregiver relinquishes control. Be unavailable. Leave the room or leave the house. Have somewhere to go.
2. What can "they" do to help? Start a running "to do" list - chores out of the house.
 - a. sweep the garage, sidewalk, back porch
 - b. unload washer/dryer
 - c. take trash cans out to street/return trash cans to house
 - d. wash the car
 - e. rake the lawn
 - f. put up/take down holiday lights/Christmas tree
 - g. get a haircut
 - h. get needed item(s) at market/Home Depot, etc.
 - i. take the dog for a walk.
 - j. return the movie to video store.
 - k. buy a birthday gift.
 - l. bathe or brush a pet.
 - m. clean out the garage
 - n. take down and clean the window screens
 - o. take the car for an oil change or maintenance.
 - p. plant flowers or tomatoes
 - q. bake cookies (buy the premixed kind or have already mixed)
3. If showers are a problem, have this person assist with the shower prior to leaving for outing. Have them start a load of laundry changing the person's sheets/pillow cases at the same time.
4. Sign up to deliver Home Delivered Meals and have someone else go with your spouse the day(s) they are there.
5. Bundle old clothes, unused tools, etc. and have them deliver to the local thrift store.

6. Have the person take your spouse to:

- a. the movies
- b. Wal-Mart
- c. Bowling
- d. Fishing
- e. Golf range
- f. Walking trail
- g. The fish hatchery
- h. The zoo
- i. Railroad Museum
- j. Visit a friend
- k. Out for coffee
- l. Lunch, dinner, dessert
- m. Get an ice cream cone
- n. To Tahoe for the day
- o. Visit someone in a nursing home.
- p. To a baseball/basketball/football game even high school.
- q. To a local play
- r. To an art gallery or museum
- s. Volunteer at the Upper Room
- t. Visit someone else who lives alone.
- u. Buy a grandchild's birthday card or present.
- v. A ride to Coloma, Apple Hill, Georgetown, Folsom, River Pines or Pollock Pines

7. Your job while your spouse is gone:

- a. Enjoy your solitude
- b. Go somewhere just by yourself.
- c. Read a book.
- d. Go to the movies with a friend.
- e. Tackle a home project without interruption.
- f. Organize your tax paperwork
- g. Take a nap.
- h. Make a long telephone call without interruption.
- i. Plant a garden, pick a bouquet of flowers.
- j. Do any of the items in #5 but at a different time/location from where your spouse is.
- k. Decide how your spouse and the "other" caregiver can help you the next time he/she comes along with your spouse.

You will be billed for this person you have hired. The rate of pay may be less than your housekeeper, your gardener, the pool man or the plumber. This person will become your "silent partner" in helping you care for your spouse at home. To your spouse, this person will become a friend. To both of you, this person will become an important part of your support system.