

# If I Get Dementia

If I get dementia, I'd like my family to hang this wish list up on the wall where I live:

## Rules for a Good Life

- If I get dementia, I want my friends and family to embrace my reality. If I think my spouse is still alive, or if I think we're visiting my parents for dinner, let me believe those things. I'll be much happier for it.
- If I get dementia, I don't want to be treated like a child. Talk to me like the adult that I am.
- If I get dementia, I still want to enjoy the things that I've always enjoyed. Help me find a way to exercise, read and visit with friends.
- If I get dementia, ask me to tell you a story from my past.
- If I get dementia, and I become agitated, take the time to figure out what is bothering me.
- If I get dementia, treat me the way that you would want to be treated.
- If I get dementia, make sure that there are plenty of snacks for me in the house. Even now, if I don't eat I get angry, and if I have dementia, I may have trouble explaining what I need.
- If I get dementia, don't talk about me as if I'm not in the room.
- If I get dementia, don't feel guilty if you cannot care for me 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's not your fault, and you've done your best. Find someone who can help you, or choose a great new place for me to live.
- If I get dementia, and I live in a dementia care community, please visit me often.
- If I get dementia, don't act frustrated if I mix up names, events or places. Take a deep breath. It's not my fault.
- If I get dementia, make sure I always have my favorite music playing within earshot.
- If I get dementia, and I like to pick up items and carry them around, help me return those items to their original places.
- If I get dementia, don't exclude me from parties and family gatherings.
- If I get dementia, know that I still like receiving hugs or handshakes.
- If I get dementia, remember that I am still the person you know and love.