



Apathy—Lack of Initiative Alzheimer's

One of the early symptoms you may notice in the person with dementia is apathy or low interest. It can be related to increased confusion or memory loss but may also be connected to depression.

Signs of Apathy

- No get up and go
- Social withdrawal
- Lack of interest/motivation in daily/favorite activities
- More likely to say 'no' to a social situation
- Appears indifferent /or not excited to have family or friends around



Apathy can lead to frustration or lack of hope for you and the person with dementia. To help make things better, try these ways to remove distractions or excuses.

Stay grounded

- Look the person in the eyes and get rid of distractions like loud noise.
- Do not ask questions in which “no” is the automatic answer.
- Give step by step directions to help the person understand the task at hand.

Try a new activity

- Think about exercise.
- Use music.
- Involve the senses.
- Include children or animals.
- Reminisce/talk about the past using old photos, mementos, or stories.

Stay Positive

- People with dementia can sense the mood of those around them.
- The more relaxed you are, the better the person will feel.
- Try to get the person to do what they can for themselves and only offer help as needed.
- Use praise, reassurance, and humor.

Ask for help

- From family, friends or even hired caregivers to create social activities at home or in the community.
- Use adult day programs which can offer stimulation, socialization, and activities.
- Form a support group of other caregivers who may offer ideas.
- Talk with the medical provider if you think your person may be depressed and may need treatment.



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