

## Tips to Ease Parent's Transition to Memory Care

Deciding to make the transition to a memory care community is rarely easy. Making the decision to transition your parent to a memory care community can be even harder. Many times, the decision to move or even considering a transition can be riddled with guilt and sadness. When parents are suffering from memory loss, they are often unable to make decisions for themselves, and if moving to a memory care community was not something previously spoken about, it can leave you as a caregiver to make this difficult decision for them.

The [Alzheimer's Association](#)® article also offers a few tips that could help to make your parent's transition easier on the both of you. They do warn, however, that discretion may need to be used in deciding which of these tactics to use, consider your parent's personality when doing so. Some of these include:

- **Don't talk about the transition too far in advance.** This can seem a little harsh, but in order to keep your loved one calm and less anxious, therefore limiting extreme behaviors, it may be better to wait to tell your parent of the transition to memory care until the time gets much closer. As the date of move-in approaches, their memory care community may offer socials, parties or programs that your loved one can get engaged in, which can help to ease them into the idea of moving.
- **Tell little fibs if necessary.** While this doesn't work for every family, and is up to what each family feels is right, some may choose to tell their parents light fibs. According to the article, it may not be necessary to tell them their new community is where they will be staying. The article suggests that if your loved one will be happier knowing the stay is short-term, come up with an excuse such as family will be out of town so they will need to stay at a "hotel" for a period of time. Be sure that the memory care staff members know this is the game plan as well, in order to make the transition easier. Over time, it will become easier and more comfortable for your parent and they may want to stay.
- **Bring familiar items from home.** This is by far one of the best ways to ease your parent into their new community. Try bringing their comforter and bedspreads, make the curtains the same color as their curtains at home, decorate similarly to what the theme of their home was. Make sure they have their favorite items and pastimes, such as books or music they love to listen to.
- **Give them time to adjust.** As much as you may want to be there every hour of every day, it's best to give them some time to adjust on their own. Give them time to get involved in programs and make some friends. Let them get used to their new home at their own pace. If you visit too soon, according to the article, they may ask you to take them back home with you, which can make it harder for them to adapt. Try talking to staff instead to check in with your loved one. After the first week, try visiting a little at a time, and once your loved one is used to their community, you can begin making visits regularly.
- **Remember that this will pass.** As hard as this seems right now, it's important to know that this will not always be so hard. Your parent will get used to their new memory care community and may come to love being there, thanks to the engaging programming, other residents and personalized care. Just remember that you made the right choice for your particular situation and are helping to give your parent the care and lifestyle they deserve.



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