

## Top Tips from One Carer's Perspective

The 10 things a Church can do - in no priority order by Jacqui Goff:

1. Please do ask how you can help, if a carer can't come up with anything at the time, don't stop asking. Sometimes, in fact often I don't know what we want, or what will help.
  2. Please do text, e mail and send cards, they mean so much.
  3. Please do encourage us, that, even if we're not seen at a service, we are still very much part of the Church family.
  4. When we attend church, space is always helpful - please don't crowd, queue up to talk, or be offended if we leave straight away, or come in late.
  5. Life needs careful planning and spontaneous visits may not always be welcome. If the carer says don't visit, please don't visit. Similarly if asked not to use house phone, then please don't.
  6. Dementia friendly services are great, but we may not always be able to make them. Things change on a minute by minute basis and we might say we're coming, then not turn up.
  7. Do understand that one size doesn't fit all. There are many different types of dementia and not all can enjoy/appreciate what is provided in a service.
  8. Some weeks it's a challenge just to get to church, please don't remind us that we haven't been for a long time. We may feel upset or guilty.
  9. Do understand that I do care about the struggles and issues of my fellow Brethren and Sisters. I might not have capacity to listen to them at the time I attend Church. I may not be able to empathise or give affirmation as my focus will be elsewhere. Another time might be better to look at your holiday snaps and photos of grandchildren – this way I can concentrate and enjoy them.
  10. Please don't forget there are other carers in the church not looking after someone with dementia. Any new initiative might highlight their own needs not being met.
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