

General Principles

Have your destination and a contact phone number written down and take this with you - also something that is familiar, like a bag, a favourite item of clothing or magazine.

Listen to familiar music or songs on a MP3 player or phone.

Watch a quiet familiar film on your iPad if appropriate.

Talk about favourite places from the past if you need to say something, or just say you prefer not to talk.

Look at and enjoy any peaceful scenery.

We can be encouraged if the way is hard as is often the case travelling alone.

General Tips

Travelling is an immense challenge for anyone with dementia, quite apart from getting lost. It can be helped by pre-booking seats, using 'Assisted Travel', even paying for the use of the business lounge at the airport, having a friendly taxi driver for unfamiliar journeys, and always carrying an explanatory card.

It is always best travelling with someone, but some can manage with assistance and also using apps on their phones.

More information can be found by watching the video on 'Travelling' on the website:

www.gloriousopportunity.org



Dr Jennifer Bute is a retired GP, diagnosed with dementia aged 63. She is a campaigner and regular speaker at events. Through her Christian faith she sees dementia as a Glorious Opportunity while acknowledging the challenges it brings. Jennifer is able to provide a doctor's perspective on dementia, while experiencing it from the inside.



Travel for those living with Dementia - different means of travel have different challenges but the principles are the same

There are many instances when travelling has precipitated the diagnosis of dementia, particularly travelling through airports which tick many of the boxes for confusion (or meltdowns) because they are busy noisy places with many unfamiliar people.

People with Dementia can become muddled, anxious, even frightened and may sometimes have trouble recognising people. Behaviour can be unusual.

However, feelings remain, when facts are forgotten. This can work both ways!

Make sure there are clear arrangements in advance. It is best to travel with someone, but if travelling alone, it needs to be clear who will be meeting the person and how they will know who is meeting them.



1. Air Travel

I travel by plane once a year and we have solved the problems of noisy chaotic airports by using the business lounges, but I can only cope with short flights as my hallucinations get worse. Several people with dementia become disorientated and may try and escape. I watch an appropriate film which lasts almost the exact time of the flight

2. Bicycle

I know very few people with dementia who still cycle apart from in the gym! There is a wonderful app using google maps which enabled elderly people with dementia (and others) to go cycling around their old childhood haunts.

3. Boat

If unfamiliar with small boats they can be challenging and we can become anxious. Larger boats are easier if there are not too many people.

4. Cruises

There are cruises designed specifically for those with dementia.

5. Bus

It is important to have an explanatory card to show to the driver and to ask to be informed of where to get off, but this is not always possible. The card also needs instructions in case something goes wrong.

6. Coach

Gold travel coaches have escorted coaches with smaller numbers of people and excellent staff. Some find Coach Holidays work well but always make sure the staff know about dementia and have an explanatory information card.

7. Car

It is always a difficult but important decision to decide when to stop driving. Having been a GP I have seen the tragic consequences of those who did not give up until after they had an accident, crashed the car or even killed someone, even though they never had an accident in their lives before.

8. Train

There are reserved seats, assisted travel, and one can claim a disabled pass. A few seem able to use apps on their phones to remind them where to get off and where to go, but this is beyond me!

Taxi - Instructions for the driver

Dementia includes symptoms such as memory problems, decreasing ability to think reason or communicate well, making it difficult for people living with dementia to express themselves or understand you. They can become muddled, anxious, even frightened, display unusual behaviour and may have trouble recognising people.

Make sure there is a clear arrangement for collection and how they will know it is you. Wear something easily recognisable. Always approach from the front. Introduce yourself with an explanation. Smile and make eye contact. Speak simply, one comment at a time. Listen and give time for a reply. Be positive and give reassurance. Avoid questions if possible. Be Patient.

Do not play loud music. Some may find any noise or music difficult, and prefer to travel in complete silence. Explain if there are radio alerts or messages. Be prepared to hand them over to someone on arrival. Check nothing has been left behind. If possible have an arrangement for payment that does not involve the person.

For the person living with dementia

If you forget your destination, your taxi driver knows and has clear instructions. No need to pay the driver at the end of the journey, if arrangements have been made. If you are not sure where to go once you arrive, ask the driver to help you. The driver will help you check nothing is left behind. Enjoy the journey - nothing is your responsibility!