

LIVING WITH MEMORY LOSS SERIES

To Do List After Diagnosis

Being diagnosed with a memory loss disorder will change your life. Once you know what you're dealing with, things won't seem as mysterious and you can focus on living one day at a time.

Here are some ideas to help make your life easier:

Learn as much as you can – Knowledge is powerful

- ❖ Ask your doctor a lot of questions
- ❖ Contact the Alzheimer's Association, you will find information about support groups, physicians, resources, referrals, and a telephone helpline with friendly people to talk to.
- ❖ You might also find some helpful books at the library, bookstore or the Internet.

Legal and financial planning

- ❖ Consult an attorney and discuss issues related to:

Durable power of attorney
Living wills
Trusts

- ❖ Even if plans exist, it's important that they be reviewed and revised.
- ❖ Early planning alleviates stress, and helps you consider important life decisions at a time when you are competent to think about how you want your life to go on.
- ❖ Planning ahead helps your family make the right decisions for you in the future.

Driving

- ❖ Discuss with your family and physician about how and when you will make decisions about driving.
- ❖ Make plans for other transportation options, such as family member, friends or community services.
- ❖ Contact the Alzheimer's Association to learn about local services.

Join a support group

- ❖ Support groups are a good source of information and provide comfort.
- ❖ Support group members are always willing to listen and help out.

Services and living arrangements

- ❖ Services and programs are available for you.

- ❖ Discuss with your family, friends, or the Alzheimer's Association programs or needs such as:

Meals on Wheels
Home health care
Day programs
Transportation
Home safety

- ❖ Talk about where or with whom you want to live when you can no longer take care of yourself.

Learn to live with Memory Loss

- ❖ Be easy on yourself. Your memory problem is due to a medical illness. You are a person of value.
- ❖ Help family members and friends know how and when they can assist you.
- ❖ Do one task at a time. Go slowly and write down instructions or steps as needed.
- ❖ Keep a sense of humor, but also recognize that there will be moments of grief and sadness.
- ❖ Above all, enjoy the present and cherish memories from your past.

"You are still the person you spent your life becoming. This is the quote that has turned my life around once I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease." Carol Hocevar*

*Brilliant Insights