Dementia is a broad category of brain diseases that causes a long term, and often gradual, decrease in the ability to think and remember, eventually impacting a person's daily functioning, and quality of life. Other common symptoms include behavioral and emotional problems which affects not only the person with the disease, but also the family and caregivers.

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**Developed By: Larissa Oryzychuk 4th year MacEwan BScN Student**
Making a Memory Book

What Is A Memory Book?
A Memory book is like a scrapbook of someone’s life. It is meant to spark an individual’s memory, and help them to remember important parts of their lives.

Why Make A Memory Book?
Many people with Dementia are prescribed antipsychotic medications as a way of regulating any adverse behaviour. In the past two years, a campaign was initiated to advocate a positive change in practice whereby natural strategies are used instead of antipsychotics to prevent unfavorable behaviours in those with dementia. A memory book is one such strategy.

What Should I Include In A Memory Book?
Important Facts to Include:
• Name, Birth Date, Birth Place
• Occupation
• Wedding Date
• Family Member Names, and Location Where Living
• Important Life Events
• Hobbies
• Musical Taste
• Favorite Foods
• Religion
• Pets/Favorite Animals
• Travel Places
• Important Friends

Tips on Choosing the Right Picture:
• Older people typically have trouble seeing, and individuals with dementia can have a hard time recognizing people, so it is recommended to use pictures of people, that are bigger, with a close up of their face.
• Include pictures that are significant to the person, these can be pictures of the person him-self, or of things that would remind them of things in their lives.

Tips on What to Write:
• Each picture, or groups of pictures should have a caption explaining its significance.
• People with dementia can have difficulties connecting the dots, and may not automatically understand and know why something is important.
• Captions should be short and factual.
• Longer descriptions are acceptable if your family member can still read, but avoid making any caption too lengthy (more than 50 words).
• With dementia, a person’s mind is continually getting worse, so it is best to keep things simple and not complicated.


References

Coping With Dementia
Caring for a family member with dementia can be difficult at times. It is important to know what you can do for yourself.
• Set aside personal time
• Take time for relaxing activities daily
• Join a support group
• Take part in individual counseling
• Lean on the support of family and friends