

Impressions

MEMORY CARE

at BRYN MAWR 

Engaging Days. Meaningful Moments.

Tips for Dealing with Hard Topics: The Driving Discussion

As dementia progresses, it might get to a point where the person can no longer drive safely. This discussion is difficult to have because it directly affects the person's sense of independence. However, this tough conversation is important because it prioritizes their safety and the safety of others on the road.

Signs That Show Driving Difficulty:

There are certain things to look for that signal a person with dementia can't drive safely anymore. Check to see if they are:

- **Having trouble turning to look in blind spots or when parking.**
- **Experiencing confusion or frustration while driving.**
- **Getting lost in familiar surroundings.**
- **Having a difficult time trying to turn the steering wheel.**
- **Not yielding to pedestrians or other drivers.**

The Discussion:

When having this discussion, remember to be calm, kind and understanding. This is a tough topic and needs to be handled with care.

- **Start the conversation and address your concerns.** Inform your family that this is happening and get everyone on the same page in case you need their help.
- **Put the conversation in the context of love and support.** Don't sound like you're making this decision for them or taking something away.
- **Show how continuing with driving would be irresponsible and dangerous.** If they're getting lost or having trouble obeying traffic laws, point out how these behaviors are not safe.
- **If the doctor has recommended the person with dementia to stop driving, address that to back up your side.** Having a medical professional's opinion might help convince your loved one.
- **Keep in mind that this might be the start of many driving discussions.** This could possibly be a series of discussions and it might take time for your loved one to agree with you.

If the Discussion Doesn't Go Well:

There's a possibility that this discussion will be tough to get through for everyone involved. If it doesn't go in a positive direction, keep these tips in mind:

- **Remember to be patient, but firm.** Show your loved one that you're coming from a place of empathy and concern. Try to understand why they are taking a particular stance.

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- **Ask another family member to help convey the message that the person's driving isn't safe.** If you are having trouble convincing your loved one, consider bringing in another family member to help convey the message.
- **Don't get discouraged or blame yourself, especially if the person has strong negative reactions.** Dementia can cause changes in personality and judgment.
- **If this discussion goes nowhere, a last resort would be to take away the keys or the car.** This should only be done if the person with dementia repeatedly refuses to stop driving.
- **Plan alternative and reliable forms of transportation.** Coordinate family members, friends or a transportation service to take over. Another option is to have medicine and groceries delivered to the house, taking away the need to have a car.

Many families are faced with having this hard discussion. By remembering to stay patient and focused on why you're having this conversation in the first place, a solution will be reached. Thinking of alternatives and coordinating as a family unit will make the discussion and new lifestyle easier.

Engaging Days. Meaningful Moments.

Loved ones with Alzheimer's disease or other memory impairments require specialized care and support. They also deserve a lifestyle rich in dignity and fulfillment.

Impressions Memory Care at Bryn Mawr provides residents with *Engaging Days* and *Meaningful Moments* that emphasize individual abilities, encourage [socialization](#) and promote the highest level of [independence](#) possible. We offer a complete continuum of leading-edge [programs, services and amenities](#) that address the total physical, emotional and social needs of residents in a caring setting that offers [individual suites](#) with large private baths and the comforts of home. Our community touches hearts and changes lives.

If and when the time comes to seek additional help, place your trust in Impressions Memory Care at Bryn Mawr. We lift the stresses and worries of being a caregiver from your shoulders, enabling you and your family to enjoy time with your loved one again.

For more information, please call Sharon at (484) 380-5404 or [contact us](#) online.

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