



Apathy – Lack of Initiative Alzheimer's

One of the early symptoms you may notice in your person with dementia is apathy. It can be the result of increased confusion or memory loss, but may also be a symptom of depression.

Signs of Apathy

- No get up and go
- Social withdrawal
- Lack of interest in usual or favorite activities
- More likely to say 'no' to a social invitation
- Appears indifferent to the presence of family and friends

Apathy can lead to feelings of hopelessness and frustration for both you and your person with dementia. To help encourage engagement, try these strategies to remove distractions or excuses.

Be practical

- Make eye contact and reduce distractions such as loud noise.
- Avoid questions in which “no” is the automatic answer.
- Give step by step instructions to help your person understand the task at hand.

Use creativity in activity

- Think exercise.
- Utilize music.
- Incorporate the senses.
- Include children or animals.
- Reminisce using old photos, mementos, or stories from the past.

Stay Positive

- Persons with dementia can sense the mood of those around them.
- The more relaxed and positive you are, the better the person will feel.
- Encourage the person to do what they can for themselves and only offer help as needed.
- Use praise, encouragement, and humor.

Ask for help

- From family, friends or even professional caregivers for social activities in or out of the home.
- From adult day programs which can provide alternative stimulation, socialization and activities.
- From a support group of other caregivers who may offer suggestions.
- From their medical provider if you think your person is depressed and may need treatment.



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For more information, visit www.BannerAlz.org
or tune into our podcast, *Dementia Untangled*