Feeling nervous or full of worry is a common feeling for people with dementia. This often stems from two sources: fear of being abandoned or alone and/or the fear of what is to come. This happens when the person can no longer understand time concepts and has lost the ability to plan and carry out activities independently.

**Anticipatory Anxiety**

Concerns about:
- Becoming more reliant on others
- An upcoming event or situation
- Disease progression and the unknown future
- Institutionalization/placement

**Separation Anxiety**

Occurs when:
- The caregiver is out of sight
- Searching/calling for the caregiver
- Following or shadowing the caregiver everywhere
- The person fears being abandoned
Strategies: 

Realize – You are becoming your person’s memory, reality, support and navigator. Your person is close by because he/she cannot function independently without you.

Absorbing Emotions – Your person can start to take on or absorb the emotions of the people around him/her. If you are agitated, they will become agitated. Keep your emotions in check. Stay calm and provide reassurance.

Predictability – With so much uncertainty, structure and routine create comfort.

Don’t Divulge – Before sharing news or information, consider how the person will handle it. If it will cause stress, wait until it is necessary and provide only limited details.

Engage – Keep your person involved in daily activities.
- Relaxation techniques – deep breaths, aromatherapy, music or adult coloring books
- Peer activities – visits with friends, adult day programs, & arts engagement programs
- Involve long-term memory (old photos, movies, or stories)
- Physical exercise can reduce pent up energy and stress – among other benefits!

Strategies not working? 
Speak with your medical provider.

For more information visit www.banneralz.org