

**Forget-Me-Not Spotlight**  
**A Caregiver's Guide to Dementia**

**By Laura N. Gitlin, Ph.D. &  
Catherine Verrier Pierson, Ph. D., OTR/L**

A review by Shannon Nosbisch, C.D.P., co-founder of Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness

*A Caregiver's Guide to Dementia* is a great book for any caregiver or family member that needs help in managing behavioral symptoms of a person living with dementia. This is a very easy to read book that addresses things that caregivers need to think about to prevent and manage behaviors.

The authors have divided this book into eight sections that can help caregivers. In Section 1, challenging behaviors and common triggers are discussed. Section 2 discusses why activities for a person living with dementia are important, what benefits are seen in the daily routine, and how to use activities in daily care. Section 3 focuses on communication, stressing that the person with dementia cannot change how they communicate, but the caregiver and/or family member can. Home safety is the focus of Section 4. The authors go room to room discussing what safety issues may be in each. They also include guidelines of how to know if it is safe to leave the person with dementia alone.

Sections 5 and 6 discuss health issues, both in terms of caregivers and persons living with dementia. In Section 5 they discuss the health and medical issues of the person living with dementia and what caregivers need to know and look for. In Section 6, the authors are talking to the caregivers about their own health, especially stress, recognizing it and managing it.

Strategies for specific behaviors are addressed in Section 7. Here the authors break down the most common behaviors and discuss the common triggers and strategies for preventing each one. Some include agitation, wandering, arguing, restlessness, sleep problems and incontinence.

Section 8 has worksheets caregivers can use to help them determine what triggers some behaviors, the caregiver's stress diary, and a couple of worksheets to determine what activities work and how to change them.

This 100 page book can be a big help to caregivers and family members by guiding them to determine triggers for unwanted behaviors and how to fill each day with activities that can give their loved one purpose and enjoyment. Please check it out soon!

*This resource is available at the Effingham Public Library, Flora Public Library, Evans Public Library, Newton Public Library, Greenup Township Public Library, Shelbyville Public Library and the Mattoon Public Library in the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center. If you do not have a library card, ask at the main desk how you can check it out.*