



## Wellington Parc

*Always There When Caring Makes A Difference*

### **10 STEPS To Being a Compassionate Caregiver For Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Their Caregivers**

- 1** Although I cannot fully understand the memory loss disease process a person has, I need to remember that this person with Alzheimer's disease deserves dignity and respect.
- 2** I need to remember that most persons with Alzheimer's are keenly aware of this present moment. Even though they will not retain the memory of this encounter, they will retain the emotions and feelings that accompanied this moment with me. Therefore let me leave them with good feelings about our encounter.
- 3** I understand that caring for persons with Alzheimer's is often an overwhelming responsibility. I need to recognize when I need to ask for help-and do it.
- 4** I need to have a sense of humor when talking with this person, because laughter helps to put things in a more positive perspective. Laughing with a person with Alzheimer's may elicit laughter and feelings of goodness from them.
- 5** I need to remember that this person is not being 'difficult' or forgetful on purpose; rather that his/her memory, behavior and personality are distorted by the illness.
- 6** Because I understand that the person with Alzheimer's will often tell the same story or joke over and over again, I need to be sensitive to his/her memory loss, especially for the short-term memory of the event which just occurred.
- 7** Many persons with Alzheimer's recall the past with vivid detail. Some actually "live" in the past, believing I am someone from their past, or forgetting a loved one has died. Let me be compassionate by never arguing or trying to convince a person with Alzheimer's otherwise.
- 8** I need to focus on and enjoy what each individual person with Alzheimer's can do this day, rather than constantly complain about what someone cannot remember or do.
- 9** I can best be a compassionate friend by "joining the journey" through "validation and distraction" techniques of compassionate communication.
- 10** I need to be aware of resources in my community to which I may go for support, companionship and information, knowing how important these resources will be for me.