

Living and Dying with Dementia

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Compassion & Choices



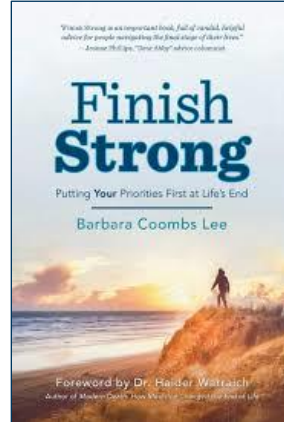
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COMPASSION & CHOICES
IMPROVES CARE,
EXPANDS OPTIONS,
AND **EMPOWERS**
EVERYONE TO
CHART THEIR
END-OF-LIFE JOURNEY.

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Finish Strong

Chapter 8 Escaping Dementia



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What is Dementia

Set of symptoms (brain cell degeneration) that affect

- memory
- thinking
- social abilities



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Types of Dementia

Progressive: Alzheimer's, Vascular, Lewy Body, Frontotemporal

Other disorders: Huntington's, Parkinson's, TBI (traumatic brain injury)

Other conditions: Brain tumors, infections, immune disorders, medications

Alzheimer's

- Most common form of dementia
- 6th leading cause of death in people over 65
- Ave. live 8 – 10 years after diagnosis
- Progressive – no cure (some drugs treatment symptoms or slow progression)
- Risk factors: old age, family history, lifestyle

alzheimer's 
association[®]

“Normal” Decline

- Word loss, especially names
- Misplaced objects such as keys, eyeglasses
- Does not impair functions and not observable to others



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Early Stage (2-3 years before dx)

- Word-finding problems noticeable to others
- Reading retention
- Misplacing valuable objects
- Problems with concentration

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Mild Stage (2-4 years)

- Decreased memory of recent events
- Struggles with challenging mental arithmetic
- Reduced ability to plan such as shopping for groceries or cooking a meal
- Becoming withdrawn in social settings

Moderate Stage (2 to 10 years)

- Major memory gaps for details, such as address or phone number
- Time confusion
- Struggle with simple mental arithmetic
- Need help with planning such as choosing clothes or cooking

Moderately Severe Stage

- Lose awareness of recent experiences and events
- Forget personal history
- Need help with daily activities (dressing, toileting)
- Sleep disruptions
- Wandering
- Personality changes



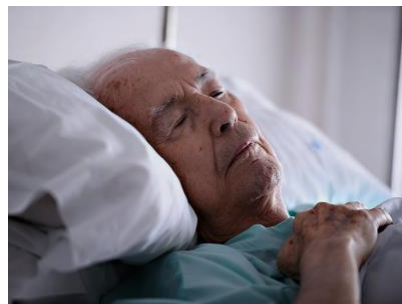
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Severe Stage

- Lose awareness of surroundings
- Lose recognizable speech
- Regularly incontinent
- Loss of ability to walk without assistance, sit upright, swallow



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Causes of Death

Complications of Alzheimer's

- Falling injuries
- Infections (lung, bladder, bedsores)
- Aspiration

End-stage Alzheimer's

- Dehydration and malnutrition

Levels of Care

- Do everything to keep me alive
- No extraordinary life-saving treatments
- Keep me comfortable and do not prevent me from dying from other diseases
- Keep me comfortable, stop all treatments and withhold food and water

[Voluntarily Stopping Eating and Drinking \(VSED\)](#)

Prepare

Dementia-specific healthcare directive

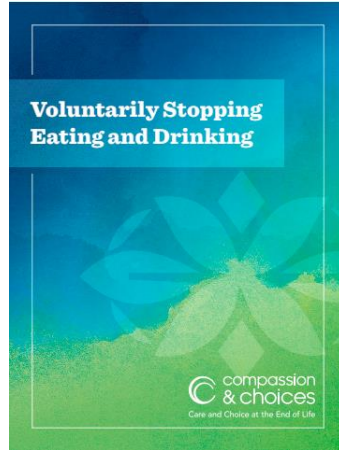
- Understand the disease
- Ensure you know all the options
- How to avoid unnecessary treatment
- Ensure your wishes are carried out

The screenshot shows the website for Compassion & Choices. The navigation bar includes links for "About Us", "Plan Your Care", "Take Action", "Resources", a search icon, and a "Donate" button. The main heading is "Dementia Values & Priorities Tool". Below the heading, there is a sub-heading "Get more out of your doctor visits." and a paragraph: "The Dementia Values & Priorities Tool helps patients stay in control of their lives and care in the early stages of a dementia diagnosis. Patients will be able to provide a set of clear-cut care...". On the right side, there are two menu items: "Plan Your Care Resource Center" and "COVID-19 Toolkit" with a plus sign.

www.CompassionAndChoices.org/values-tool



Voluntary Stopping Eating and Drinking (VSED)



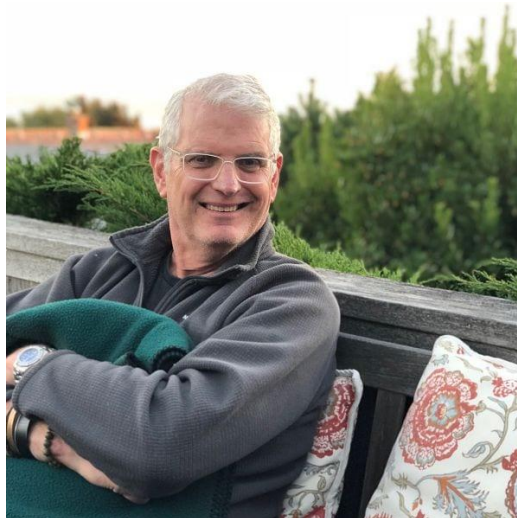
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Dan's Story



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Audience Questions

