



# The Primrose Press

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## **SPEAK TO THE HEART**



We often do things that are seemingly minute to us, but these things can mean a great deal to others. Imagine that you have Alzheimer's or dementia. Little by little your memory fades away. Not only would you forget how to do things like use the microwave and cook, but you forget your family and friends and are no longer able to express your feelings: however, you are still in there somewhere.

This would make it very difficult not only for you to communicate with others, but for others to communicate with you as well. If you are unable to use words to communicate with others, it is important to find other ways to communicate with them. The small things we can do to communicate with those who suffer from dementia are numerous. You can communicate through touch: a hug, holding hands, a back rub; you can communicate with them by being attentive to their needs: combing/brushing their hair, tell them how nice they look, how nice their smile is – everyone likes a compliment.

All in all, at the end of the day the way you do things like hold their hand and giving them a reassuring smile, that is what lets them know it's okay. These seemingly insignificant things are what speak volumes, often without having to say a single word; these things are what speak to someone's heart.

So when it becomes difficult to hold a conversation with someone who has Alzheimer's or dementia, try holding their hand or giving them a smile. You may not know what they are thinking, but that smile or a pat on the back might be just what they need. It's not always the big things, but rather the small things that speak to the heart.

*\* Article written by Michelle Remold posted on the Alzheimer's Speaks Blog. Michelle graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a BA in Gerontology: Social Sciences and a minor in Family Studies. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree in Aging Studies and Nursing Home Administration.*



There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. George Sand