## Through their eyes

A breakthrough approach to compassionate communication



By Amy Clark

ementia is a progressive disease and has no cure. There is no way to rewind time or get back what has been lost. It is an impairment of control of memory, judgment, and impulses. Dementia is an irreversible decline in several intellectual functions that interferes with an individual's normal social and/or occupational activity. What works today may not work tonight or tomorrow.

Most people who suffer from dementia are not deliberately stubborn, mean, suspicious or ungrateful. The brain damage generally makes them behave differently than they would wish. Their behavior is beyond rational explanation or willful control. Those with Dementia Disease are still adults deserving dignified treatment at all times.

Alzheimer's is the most common diagnosis, however, there is no way to 100% diagnose what type of dementia a person has until after an autopsy is performed. One can look at the progression, what meds work and do not work, symptoms and scans to give a good reasonable diagnosis.



## THROUGH THEIR EYES

A Breakthrough Approach to Compassionate Communication

Barton House in Louisville, KY has implemented a revolutionary program dedicated to helping people with dementia live their best lives.

Our goal has always been to provide an environment that respects and honors the personal dignity of our residents and helps them live their best lives for as long as they can. We also believe that, given the proper care and environment, people living with dementia can still experience feelings of engagement, accomplishment and joy. We've developed a unique program designed to help our residents have the most positive and rewarding time possible with us.

The program is called "Through Their Eyes." It's a comprehensive, proven program based on years of research and best practices. Instead of trying to pull residents into our world, which may be getting harder for them to understand, we look at the world Through Their Eyes. At the heart of our program is an approach called "Compassionate Communication." This technique gently bends the truth or redirects the resident's train of thought to avoid agitation and fear. Everything about our environment, from the color of the walls to the music we play, has been purposefully chosen to create a homelike environment characterized by dignity, security, individuality, independence and well-being.



- Meet the needs of people with dementia or cognitive impairment in a way that promotes dignity, freedom, independence, and security.
- Reduce the progression of the disease while increasing the quality of life for each individual resident.
- Enhance and prolong a resident's ability to maintain independence, nurture a homelike environment, and cherish life as a gift that is always meaningful.
- Maintaining an environment that is different from any other facility that cares for people with dementia.
- Involve family members and significant others as an essential part of our caregiving team, wherever and whenever possible.
- Give care based on individuals' personality, needs, and level of understanding.

For more information on Through Their Eye's program or what Barton House of Louisville offers please call 502-423-7177 or visit our website bartonlouisville.com.

