

Shifting the Narrative: A Call to Compassion and Understanding

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THE CHALLENGE

Dementia and Disconnection

- Stigma doesn't only change language – it changes relationships.
- Language shapes perception.
- People are often spoken about rather than spoken with.
- Assumptions replace curiosity.
- Isolation grows when people feel unseen or unheard.

“My journey to diagnosis has taught me how quickly a person can become invisible when others focus only on their diagnosis.”

THE FRAMEWORK

SEE ME

Recognize the person before the diagnosis.

HEAR ME

Listen to lived experience without assumptions.

VALIDATE ME

Acknowledge thoughts, feelings, and experiences as real and meaningful.

This framework is not a clinical intervention. It is a human practice that strengthens connection, dignity, and belonging.

LANGUAGE MATTERS

Instead of...	Consider...
Demented	Person living with dementia
Sufferer	Person / individual
Burden	Person needing support
Victim	Person living with dementia
Empty shell	Person with abilities, experiences, and relationships

Shared Principles

- ✓ Respect personhood.
- ✓ Avoid fear-based language.
- ✓ Include people living with dementia in conversations affecting them.
- ✓ Recognize cultural differences in language preferences.
- ✓ Focus on dignity and agency.

FROM DEMENTIA TO HUMAN CONNECTION

See Me. Hear Me. Validate Me.
It is more than a framework for dementia. It is a way of recognizing the humanity in every person we meet. It offers a pathway toward stronger human connection in families, communities, healthcare settings, and everyday life.

Choose Connection:

- ✓ Introduce yourself.
- ✓ Ask before assuming.
- ✓ Listen more than you speak.
- ✓ Acknowledge emotions.
- ✓ Stay curious.
- ✓ Choose connection over distance.