

QUICK TIPS

Asking to Go Home

When someone with dementia expresses a desire to "go home," it often reflects a need for comfort, familiarity, or a sense of security rather than the literal act of returning to a physical home.

Here are some suggestions for how to respond to someone:

- Validate emotions. "I understand. Home is such a comforting place."
- Do not correct the person. Ask questions like: "Tell me about home. What's it like?" This allows them to feel heard and understood without causing distress.
- Offer reassurance and gently shift focus to something pleasant or engaging. "You're safe here, and I'm here with you." Or, "Let's have some tea together while you tell me about home."
- Distract after providing validation and reassurance. Offer an activity they enjoy, like looking through photo albums or listening to favorite music.

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- If the person appears agitated, a soothing calm environment with soft lighting, calming music, or a quiet space may help reduce distress.
- If possible, surround the person with familiar objects, scents, or photos from their past home. This might help them feel more secure and connected to the environment.
- Use Therapeutic Reasoning™ when needed. If they insist on going home, you can gently use a comforting statement to reassure and reduce anxiety: "We'll go soon, but it's late and dark outside. Let's leave first thing in the morning". Or, "Let's wait for the weather to improve, and then we'll check on it."
- Understand the underlying need for wanting to go home. Could it be from unmet emotional or physical need? Consider: Are they feeling lonely, hungry, or tired? Could they benefit from a calming activity like a hand massage or sitting outside?

Reminder: If this behaviour becomes frequent and challenging, please reach out to Dementia Solutions with tailored personalized strategies. Above all, approach the person with patience and compassion, focusing on helping them feel safe and cared for in the moment.