

HACK

CARE



TIPS AND TRICKS FOR A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY HOME.





FOREWORD

BY LIEN FOUNDATION

Call it an inevitable consequence of a fast-ageing world, but every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia. Fifty million people—the vast majority in their 60s or older — live with this degenerative disorder of the brain, which can affect memory, reason, and personality, and rob one’s sense of self.

Rapidly-ageing Singapore is no different. With the condition exacting a heavy caregiving toll, persons with dementia make up a growing proportion of residents in nursing homes

worldwide. But they can and should be enabled to age amidst the warmth and familiarity of their own homes for as long as possible. Institutional care need not be the de facto option.

However, our everyday home environments do not always anticipate the unique needs of people battling cognitive and physical frailty. For the most part, we remain unaware of the physiological obstacles encountered daily, and how some simple and creative interventions at home can mitigate their struggles. This is where design can play an outsized role in

shaping environments that empower persons with dementia as well as their caregivers. Innovations in design can smooth friction caused by disease and debilitation, and help users find happiness in everyday experiences at home. Many academic papers on dementia-friendly environments offer guidelines or principles for caregivers and seniors themselves. But a gap remains between principle and practice.

It was with an aim to bridge this gap that the Lien Foundation commissioned Lekker Architects and Lanzavecchia+Wai, an industrial design studio, to weave creativity with practical design experience and improve the homes and lives of persons affected by dementia.

HACK CARE chronicles the fruits of this collaboration, showcasing “design hacks” — or smart adjustments — to everyday IKEA furniture and products to create a dementia-friendly home. The ideas are presented in the form of an IKEA catalogue, with its customary catchy language and bold graphics. While this is an independent initiative, we chose IKEA products for their accessibility and ease of use. With more than 400 stores worldwide, the Swedish furniture giant’s affordable, easy-to-assemble products have made their way into homes across cultures, countries and continents. It has also teamed up with Swedish construction firm Skanska and Queen Silvia of Sweden to create “SilviaBo”, a range of low-cost, dementia-and-disability-friendly, modular housing for people in their mid-fifties or older. It is in this spirit that we offer this book.

In the urban language of millennials, to “hack” something is to improvise and adapt it. The solution may be rough and imperfect, but it’s often smart and effective. This attitude to problem-solving parallels the versatility of IKEA products that lend themselves easily to improvisation. As a creative “on-the-ground” response, the hack is truly democratic — it is open

to anyone who wants to improve the status quo. We hope the ideas in the pages that follow can inspire caregivers to also come up with their own hacks uniquely suited to the tastes and preferences of their loved ones.

Living with dementia is daunting, but challenges can be overcome with imagination, compassion and lessons learnt from the shared experiences of those who have been on a similar journey before. We end this catalogue with insights from individuals who have an intimate understanding of dementia at the professional and personal levels. We hope that these real-life stories will let caregivers know that they are not alone in this journey and that they can always count on the collective wisdom of others.

The Foundation would like to thank the team of architects and designers who worked tirelessly on this project. They brought empathy into their design process, trying to understand the everyday needs of the person with dementia and their caregivers. The design ideas illustrated within were refined many times over, as the team deliberated over how each design idea would improve their quality of life.

As we were finalising this labour of love, the world was caught unawares by a pandemic which is reaping a grim harvest of human lives, particularly among the elderly. For persons with dementia, COVID-19 has dealt a cruel double whammy. Families have been hard-pressed to explain to their loved ones why they must be cooped up at home all the time. Disruption can be especially disorienting for seniors with cognitive frailty. We hope the practical ideas in this book can help make life at home more comfortable, even enjoyable, during this difficult time.

Stay safe and be inspired!

HACK CARE

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY HOME

Welcome! This catalogue presents more than 240 pages of ideas to make your home a friendlier environment for your elderly loved ones. We've assembled practical hacks, wacky ideas, and simple tips and tricks to simplify your life as you cope with the daily challenges of caregiving.

We also share diverse stories that uncover the human experience and emotions behind the caregiving journey — so that you will never feel alone. We hope that this "catalogue of ideas" will inspire you to come up with your own brilliant hacks, suited to your own needs.

Go ahead. Hack care.

REFLECTIONS

Our essays reflect on how our loved ones perceive everyday furniture, sensations, and rituals. We suggest ways to enhance them into meaningful experiences that improve their well-being.

- 12** The Chair
- 56** Keeping in Touch
- 82** Conviviality and Meals
- 190** The "Dusk Crisis"



MICRO-WORLDS



p. 54

FIDGET PLAY

No gadgets here, but many ideas for fidgety fingers.



p. 80

THE LIVING TABLE

Rest your elbows while we table great ideas for you to ponder.



p. 100

NEW ROOM

Adapt furniture arrangements to suit living needs.

DAILY RITUALS



p. 122

MEALTIME

Make it all delicious and fuss-free.



p. 148

CARE & CLEANING

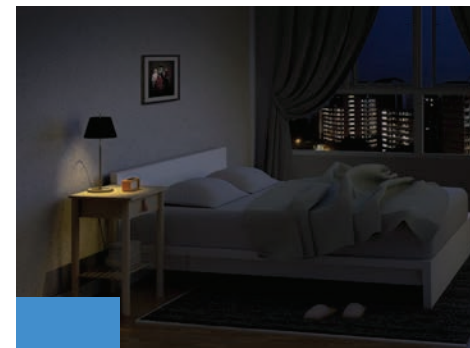
Cleaning tips to make things spick and span.



p. 166

VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

Clean the view and hide the mess. We make life simple.



p. 188

TIME & LIGHT

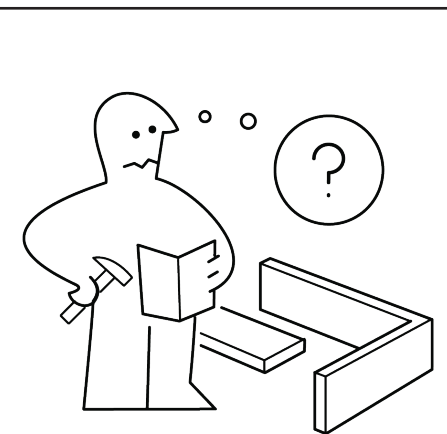
From sunrise to sunset, the light is our friend.



p. 210

VOICES

- 212** Ruth Wong, ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ASSOCIATION
- 220** Dr Wong Chek Hooi, KHOO TECK PHUAT HOSPITAL
- 226** Eric Lim, BRAHM CENTRE
- 234** Ong Ker-Shing, LEKKER ARCHITECTS



INSTRUCTION MANUALS

- POÄNG** Assembly Instructions
- ALGOT** Assembly Instructions
- LIVING TABLE** Assembly Instructions
- FIDGET BOARD** Assembly Instructions

www.hackcare.sg

Published by Lien Foundation
Copyright © 2020 June

National Library Board, Singapore
Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
Hack Care: Tips And Tricks For A Dementia-Friendly Home
Singapore : Lien Foundation : Lekker Architects, 2020
ISBN: 978-981-14-6057-9 (paperback)
978-981-14-6058-6 (digital)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by an means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher.

Printed by Oxford Graphic Printers



THIS IS A MANIFESTO

GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO EMPOWER PERSONS WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

01 Let persons with dementia play an active role.

As much as possible, help them do as many things by themselves as they can. Doing so maintains an active state of mind and forestalls cognitive decline.

02 Encourage decision-making.

Even as life becomes challenging, present simple choices and let them continue making decisions. This helps to stimulate their minds and also gives them control.

03 Affirm their sense of self.

Respect them as persons and honour their desires and preferences.

04 Have simple conveniences within easy reach.

When they can fulfil simple needs by themselves, their sense of agency is reinforced. Balance between being enabling and protective.

05 Familiarity is comforting.

Avoid drastic changes. Include habitual rituals and objects that reassure. These help to conjure familiar associations and memories.

06 Don't forget the simple pleasures.

Delightful sensations – however fleeting – improve the spirit and well-being.

07 Simplify the environment.

Clutter, noise, and other visual stimuli can be disorienting. Remove these environmental triggers for calmness and serenity.

08 Do things together.

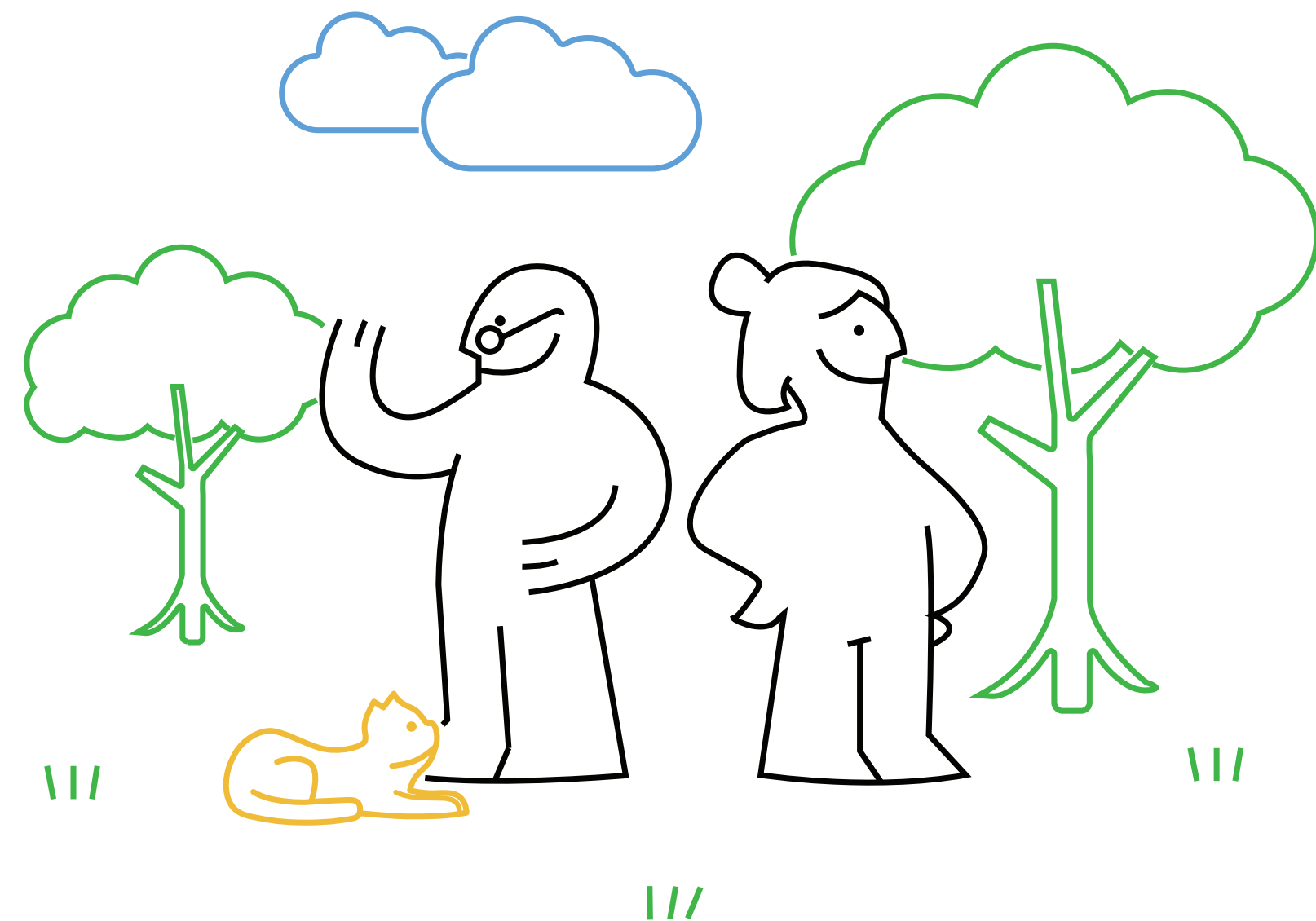
Encourage family members to interact meaningfully with the person with dementia. Include them in day-to-day family activities, but let them engage on their own terms.

09 Stay flexible and adaptable.

Caring requires the versatility to manage unexpected situations. It helps to be organized and prepared. Be willing to ask for help.

10 The caregiver matters.

Simplify things for the caregiver as much as possible and make time for regular breaks. Self-care allows the caregiver to care better for his or her loved one.



MEET ALBERT & LUCY

Our forgetful friends who lead very colourful lives and enjoy fun activities. Simple, delightful sensations give them immense joy. At their age, Albert and Lucy still do many things themselves although they occasionally need some help. Sometimes they forget very simple things – but none of it ever matters.

Look out for them as you journey through this book.