

## **Guiding Principles for Care of a Person with Dementia who has Experienced Relational Violence in their Past:**

1. It is important to know as much as possible about the details of the relational violence the person endured – ask family, friends as she/he can no longer tell his story.
2. Understanding what trauma a person has endured helps to understand his/her behaviours in a flashback and helps to provide safe care.
3. Safety is always the first goal - physical safety and/or a feeling of being safe.
4. In order to build trust one must feel safe.
5. Build on the person's strengths – get to know her/him as a person- talk to his/her family, learn about important relationships in her/his life, what were his/her likes in food, music, colours, books etc. Learn about past jobs, hobbies, passions, volunteering, dreams.
6. Go to where the person is – don't expect her/him to come to you. For example; If he/she slides to the floor sit on the floor with her/him and eventually help him/her back up.
7. Promote choices as abuse is about power and control and loss of free will – avoid using the word no, ask questions rather than telling her/him what to do.
8. Do the opposite of the cruelty he/she endured – treat her/him as a person with dignity and a non-judgmental attitude, call him/her by name often, use a soft calming voice tone, gentle and slow movements, kind words, consistency in behaviour, good eye contact, warm temperature, soothing lights, soft music, and add beauty to her/his surroundings as ways of healthy caring.
9. Accept that sometimes we just don't understand why he/she gets triggered because we do not know her/his entire trauma story and never will.
10. One can never underestimate the power of caring.

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