

# DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMERS DISEASE

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## A proposal for dementia care: Self-management for autonomous interdependent life empowerment

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Sense of well-being is largely subjective. However, there are certain common factors that can help persons with dementia live well; one of these is maintaining good relationships with others because dementia is a disease that deprives sufferers of their independence and they inevitably have to live with receiving others support. The authors propose Self-Management of Autonomous Interdependent Life Empowerment (SMILE) as a method of self-management support for persons with early-stage dementia. The program requires persons with dementia to reflect on their daily lives within the context of their relationships with others. Daily life involves maintaining relationships with others; therefore, reflecting on actual everyday activities and events naturally leads to reflection on one's current relationships. Persons with dementia are required to express appreciation to their families every night when they remember the day, and their family members are required to respond to their appreciation. In this way, persons with dementia and their families may form the habit of consciously reflecting on their relationships. The goal of SMILE is to help persons with dementia sense their own existence within their relationships with others and feel thankful for the relationships that they have. It is desirable to ensure the dementia sufferer's will to live well during the early stages. If the person with dementia realizes the meaning of living in interdependence with others, they may retain their dignity until the advanced stages when they will have to receive care, since interdependent relationships can be one of the key factors to live well with dementia.

### Biography

Yohko Maki is a Researcher at the National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology (NCGG) and she also currently serves as Chief of Education and Innovation Center at NCGG. Her research is focused on dementia care, dementia rehabilitation and social participation of persons with dementia to improve social quality of life of persons with dementia and their family members.

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