



# MEMORY CAFÉ

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ▶ What is a memory café?

A memory café is a safe, welcoming, non-judgmental environment where people living with dementia and their care partners can connect with each other and with others in similar situations. A memory café is designed so people living with dementia and their care partners can be involved in their communities without the stigma typically associated with dementia.

### ▶ Why are memory cafés important?

Often, people experiencing cognitive impairment and their care partners become socially isolated. Social isolation can negatively impact the physical and mental health of people living with dementia and their care partners. Memory cafés help to reduce social isolation by allowing care partners and people living with dementia to form meaningful connections with other people and create new friendships. Memory cafés also allow care partners and their loved ones to engage in activities together and can help improve the quality of life for both the person living with dementia and their care partner.

### ▶ Why is attending memory cafés important for care partners as well as people with dementia?

Memory cafés benefit a care partner just as much as the person with dementia. Memory cafés can help reduce care partner stress, provide informal support, and improve their mental and physical health. Memory cafés also provide knowledge and resources about caring for someone with dementia.

### ▶ What do you do at a memory café?

Anything! Memory café activities include anything that gets people with living with dementia and their care partners engaged in their communities. A memory café can be an actual “café” where people chat over treats, while some memory cafés may have more structured activities, such as art projects.

### ▶ Do I need to register in advance?

Generally, registration is highly recommended, but not required. We recognize that the needs of someone living with dementia can vary day-to-day. Information on how to register will be included with each memory café.

### ▶ Are memory cafés appropriate for all forms and stages of dementia?

Yes! Memory cafés are accessible for all stages of dementia. Activities are designed to be meaningful for those in earlier stages and can be modified to accommodate people in later stages.

### ▶ At what stage of dementia is it best to attend a memory café?

Social isolation impacts people living with dementia and their care partners during all stages of the disease. There is no “best time” to attend memory cafés. However, people generally enjoy memory cafés during the early-to-mid stages. While memory café activities are accessible for people in later stages, getting the person with dementia to the memory café may become increasingly difficult for some care partners during the late stage.



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### ▶ Are memory cafés respite care for caregivers?

Generally, no. Memory cafés are for the care partner as much as they are for the person living with dementia. Care partners should not use memory cafés to “drop off” their loved one. However, like respite care, memory cafés can alleviate caregiver stress, as a memory café provides a time when the care partner does not have to worry about finding an activity for their loved one.

### ▶ Are memory cafés support groups?

No. While the connections made may serve as an informal support group, a memory café is not a formal support group.

### ▶ I’m not a primary caregiver—can I still attend a memory café with someone living with dementia?

Yes! Family members and friends are welcome to attend.

### ▶ Can people living with dementia attend if they do not have caregivers?

Yes, unless someone has needs that would require assistance from a caregiver.

### ▶ Will I be asked about my diagnosis?

No, attendees at a memory café will never be asked about their diagnosis. This also means you do not need a formal diagnosis of dementia to attend a memory café.

### ▶ Where are memory cafés held?

Anywhere! Memory cafés are held in any handicapped-accessible place. Examples include libraries, businesses, and museums.

### ▶ Is there a charge to attend a memory café?

No. Occasionally, there may be a small fee for supplies. We will never prohibit someone from attending if they are unable to pay the fee.

### ▶ Should I bring money?

That is entirely up to you. Most memory cafés accept donations. Depending on the location of the café, you may have the option to purchase additional food or beverages.

### ▶ Where can I find a memory café?

Go to [www.memorycafedirectory.com](http://www.memorycafedirectory.com) to find memory cafes near you, although some of the information may not be up to date. You can also go to [www.dementiafriendsindiana.org](http://www.dementiafriendsindiana.org) for information on Indiana memory cafés. If you would like more information or are interested in getting involved with memory cafés, email [dfi@cicoa.org](mailto:dfi@cicoa.org). You can also call 317-254-5465 and ask for Dementia Friends Indiana.



[dementiafriendsindiana.org](http://dementiafriendsindiana.org)