

Testimonials from SHARE Counselors

*Christi Clark, Director of Education and Support Services,
Insight Memory Care Center, Fairfax, Virginia*

"I am very happy with the **SHARE** program. What I'm finding is that couples find the initial diagnosis of early-stage dementia overwhelming. When they are presented with the **SHARE** program they are not sure how it will help them, but they are pleasantly surprised with the result. The process brings them back together as a couple, not just a caregiver to the person living with dementia."

"Talking about these issues is so difficult. **SHARE** allows couples and other family members to have difficult conversations that they haven't had before...the caregiver often is afraid to bring up certain issues as are adult children. With **SHARE** as a starting point and as a guide, the couple can discuss how they perceive the future. Often the caregiver feels they should take care of all of the needs of the person living with dementia, who often doesn't feel the same way...they don't want to burden their loved one and want to ask other family members or professionals to help out. Adult children may not be willing or capable of taking on caregiving roles. **SHARE** provides someone to listen to them and their concerns without judgment."

"The iPad provides a visual that helps the couple have insight into how much the caregiver will be needed in the care plan. Through the **SHARE** circles, both can see that there may be too much on the caregiver's plate, and they are able to enlist family members to help out, even for a few hours a week."

"It is important to introduce **SHARE** early on the process...as soon as there is a diagnosis. The program allows the caregiver to see early on that they have to create a support system, and see who they have in their circle of support to take the person living with dementia to a movie or shopping, so the caregiver can have a few hours of respite. **SHARE** allows the caregiver to ask for specific help early on in their journey."

"With the **SHARE** program, just because a person receives a dementia diagnosis, they are able to see that there is a lot they can do and can still live a productive life...they will just do it differently."

***Gina Major, MAEd LPC, SHARE Counselor and Dementia Care Coach,
Alzheimer's Association, Cleveland Area Chapter***

"All too often, the newly diagnosed and their care partner are given a brief explanation from a medical provider about the next steps. This happens quickly and impersonally; the care partners' fears and resources are not discussed in detail, making it difficult to develop a care plan... **SHARE** acknowledges the PERSON that is part of the process."

"**SHARE** supports the caregivers and the care receivers to overcome the challenges of dementia while facing the stigma of the disease head on."

"**SHARE** facilitates discussion surrounding each care partner's preferences and values for care not only now but also for the future."

"Many families assign most of the care tasks to the caregiver and experience an 'aha moment' when it comes to visualizing the balance of care."

"**SHARE** empowers the care partners to keep doing what they love, to share experiences with the people they love, and to live a rewarding life."