

# Celebrating with aging seniors to create holiday magic



## The Caraday Way

Sensitivity and a little planning can go a long way in helping to connect and create lasting memories with elder family members. During the holidays, every community is flowing with holiday magic — it's the Caraday Way.

*“One of the best examples of gratitude towards our residents is having a positive attitude with every encounter. Around the holidays, it is important to be positive and be there for them as we might be the only ‘family’ they have.”*

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Meet your family and friends at their level and do not force your personal expectations in creating a perfect holiday. To make sure proposed holiday gatherings are in line with what your loved one wants, consider these tips:

### **Start by engaging your family member in planning.**

Help them feel needed and respected by being part of the planning process in choosing special meals, decorating with cherished mementos, scheduling activities, and so forth. Even if they cannot actively participate, being among the chatter and laughter may be the best way to engage.

### **Remember their favorite foods.**

Nothing feels more special than having favorite foods included in the menu. Sitting around a table and enjoying food can be a magic moment to draw out memories.

### **Revive traditions.**

Ask your family member if they remember any special traditions and then make them happen. Then, follow their lead in enjoying the traditions.

### **Stroll down memory lane.**

Sharing some quiet time to look at photos or share memories can bring up happy memories and maybe some tears. But that's ok too because part of grieving is remembering. Use that time to ask questions, particularly those that make a person think or feel, versus remember. This is particularly good for older adults with memory challenges.

### **But no quizzes.**

Let the memories flow but do not quiz seniors in trying to remember everything. This can cause a lot of anger and sadness in your loved one, especially if other members of the family are around. Instead, use music, smells, or touch to create a more relaxed and positive environment.

### **Most of all, do not force anything.**

Follow the pace of your guest and do not force anything. If they appear more irritable, depressed, or fatigued, be patient and meet them where they are and do not insist on directing plans.

Whatever form your celebration takes, be in the moment and enjoy – don't let health or memory challenges take away from your time together.



For more information call 512-641-8805, email us at [contact@caradayhealth.com](mailto:contact@caradayhealth.com) or visit [caradayhealth.com](http://caradayhealth.com)