An Overview of

The Best Friends™ Approach to Dementia Care

Developed by
Virginia Bell and David Troxel
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Description

Caregivers worldwide have adopted the groundbreaking and uplifting Best Friends™ method for the care of people with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. This comprehensive approach is grounded in the understanding that relationships are supremely important in dementia care and that they require the essential elements of friendship: respect, empathy, support, trust, humor. These are the building blocks of a replicable, effective care model that is easy for staff to embrace. The Best Friends™ approach to dementia care is completely person-centered and flexible enough to adapt to each person’s remaining strengths and abilities.

Since the 1997 publication of the first book, The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care, this compassionate model of care has gained global respect and demonstrated meaningful outcomes. Tens of thousands of copies of the books described in the Products section of this report have been sold, and the Best Friends™ model is used to provide quality memory care across the U.S. and in European, Asian, Middle Eastern, and South American countries.

Several key elements are hallmarks of the Best Friends™ approach.

Key Elements

The Best Friends™ Dementia Bill of Rights: This universal touchstone for Alzheimer’s care programs around the world was drafted by Best Friends™ developers Virginia Bell and David Troxel to reflect the underlying core principles of their philosophy, stressing compassion, empathy, and respect in the face of a devastating disease.

Every person diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementia deserves:

- To be informed of one’s diagnosis
- To have appropriate, ongoing medical care
- To be treated as an adult, listened to, and afforded respect for one’s feelings and point of view
- To be with individuals who know one’s life story, including cultural and spiritual traditions
- To experience meaningful engagement throughout the day
- To live in a safe and stimulating environment
- To be outdoors on a regular basis
- To be free from psychotropic medications whenever possible
- To have welcomed physical contact, including hugging, caressing, and handholding
- To be an advocate for oneself and for others
- To be part of a local, global, or online community
- To have care partners well trained in dementia care

Life Story: Also at the core of Best Friends™ is the understanding that good dementia care begins with acknowledgment of a person’s life story. Because people with dementia often can no longer tell us their histories, care partners must become their biographers, even if it means becoming a good detective. The more a care partner knows about a person, the more he or she can use the Life Story to improve interactions and care, including

- Greeting the person and improving recognition
- Introducing the person to others
- Reminiscing
- Improving communication through clues and cues
- Designing appropriate activities
- Pointing out past accomplishments
- Helping to prevent challenging behaviors
- Incorporating past daily rituals
- Broadening the caregiving network and resources

Knack: Defined as “the art of doing difficult things with ease,” the Knack represents an attitude and set of skills that guarantee the success of the Best Friends™ approach.

Having the Knack entails

Knowledge: understanding Alzheimer’s disease and the experience of the person with the disease

Nurturing: through the Life Story, making care relevant to each person

Approach: effective communication with the person with dementia

Community: facilitating successful activities

Kinship: including family and friends in the care program*

* Source: The KNACK Learning Framework™ from the licensed Best Friends™ Approach Associate Trainer Program created by Alzheimer Society Calgary (Canada).

The elements of Knack central to the Best Friends™ approach include:

- Being well informed
- Having empathy
- Respecting the basic rights of the person
- Maintaining caregiving integrity
- Employing finesse
- Knowing it is easier to get forgiveness than to get permission
- Using common sense
- Communicating skillfully
- Maintaining optimism
- Setting realistic expectations
- Using humor
- Employing spontaneity
- Maintaining patience
- Developing flexibility
- Staying focused
- Being nonjudgmental
- Valuing the moment
- Maintaining self-confidence
- Using cueing tied to the Life Story
- Taking care of oneself
- Planning ahead
Communication: The Best Friends™ philosophy of communication is grounded in a set of core principles:

- Remember the basics of good communication
- Understand the person’s desire to communicate
- Make a good first impression
- Create an environment that facilitates good communication
- Treat the person as an adult
- Maintain caregiving integrity
- Respond to emotional needs
- Remember the importance of nonverbal communication
- Remember that behaviors communicate a message
- Do not take the person too literally
- Employ good timing
- Use repetition to facilitate better communication
- Do not argue or confront
- Screen out troubling messages or news
- Speak using positive language
- Employ humor in communication
- Do most of the work
World-Renowned Developers and Authors

Virginia Bell, M.S.W., and David Troxel, M.P.H.

Virginia Bell and David Troxel are recognized internationally for their groundbreaking and innovative work helping people with dementia, their families, and professional caregivers. With more than 60 years of combined experience working in university, community, and adult day center settings, they have pioneered the development of an effective, meaningful model of care in the Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care.

Virginia Bell, M.S.W., is Program Consultant for the Greater Kentucky/Southern Indiana Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association. She is a pioneer in the dementia care field, having founded one of the first dementia-specific adult day programs, the award-winning Helping Hand Adult Day Center (funded in part through the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation), which for more than 25 years has been a model for dozens of other programs nationally and now, renamed the Best Friends Adult Day Center, also serves as a “teaching-learning center” for social work, nursing, and medical students from the University of Kentucky. She has published numerous journal articles and book chapters, and she has co-authored five books with David Troxel and continues to work on other projects to expand Best Friends™. Bell has been recognized at the regional, state, and national levels for her leadership and good works, including prestigious awards from the American Society on Aging, the University and the state of Kentucky, and the national Alzheimer’s Association, and she has served on two Governor’s task forces on aging and Alzheimer’s disease. She has lectured about the Best Friends™ approach in more than 25 countries and presented at more than 20 Alzheimer’s Disease International conferences.

David Troxel, M.P.H., is a consultant about dementia across the continuum of aging care. He served for a decade as President and CEO of the California Central Coast Alzheimer’s Association, Santa Barbara, California (1994–2004), and was previously Executive Director for the Lexington/Bluegrass Chapter (KY) of the Alzheimer’s Association. He sat on the Executive Board of the American Public Health Association as well as the Ethics Advisory Panel of the national Alzheimer’s Association. David also has first-hand experience as a care partner to his mother, Dorothy, during her 10-year journey through Alzheimer’s disease. Mr. Troxel is in high demand as a speaker for regional and national events and is known worldwide for his writing and teaching in the fields of Alzheimer’s and long-term care. He has co-authored five books with Virginia Bell, continues to work on other projects to expand Best Friends™, and has written numerous articles relating to Alzheimer’s care, staff development, and training.

Mr. Troxel travels extensively as he consults with providers and organizations interested in improving dementia care and implementing culture change through the Best Friends™ approach. This accomplished trainer resonates with all levels of care partners, from families and direct care staff to managers and administrators. His multimedia training materials are customized for a variety of professional training purposes and settings, from informal
presentations to train-the-trainer packages. Among his clients are Atria Senior Living, American Baptist Homes of the West, Home Instead Senior Care, Moorings Park, Prestige Senior Living, and Touchmark Senior Living

**Collaborators**

Bell and Troxel have included two distinguished colleagues in the further development and dissemination of the Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care.

**Tonya M. Cox, M.S.W.**, is Executive Director for The Homeplace at Midway, a new Green House® community owned by Christian Care Communities, Inc. Her previous responsibilities as Director of Community Based Services for Christian Care included training and sustaining the Best Friends™ approach and overseeing the original Best Friends™ Adult Day Center in Lexington, Kentucky. She has also served as Vice President for Mission and Service for the Greater Kentucky/Southern Indiana Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, and for more than 15 years has been developing programs and services for persons with dementia and their caregivers, including working on national curriculum development for professional caregivers in various care settings. Cox presents locally and nationally on activity programming and dementia care. She is a co-author on two of the Best Friends™ books (*The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One* and *Volume Two*) and is contributing to a revised edition of the original *Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care* with Virginia Bell and David Troxel. She has served as co-chair of the Kentucky Alzheimer’s Disease Advisory Council and is a practicum supervisor for both the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work.

**Robin Hamon, M.S.W.**, is Family Support Coordinator for the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center at the University of Kentucky Sanders Brown Center on Aging. She worked with the Alzheimer’s Association Lexington/Bluegrass Chapter for 11 years. During her tenure as program manager for the Helping Hand Day Center, she developed a creative arts training program for staff and volunteers working with persons with dementia. Her special interests are in training and providing creative arts experiences for persons with dementia. Hamon is a co-author of *The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One* and *Volume Two*.

**Expert Leaders for Master Trainer Certification**

Virginia Bell, David Troxel, and Tonya Cox are designated Expert Leaders in the provision of Best Friends™ Master Trainer certification. Only Expert Leaders can train others to become certified Master Trainers, who in turn are qualified to provide basic training in the Best Friends™ Approach to others. The Guidelines on certification are available as a helpful PDF download at [www.healthpropress.com/bfai](http://www.healthpropress.com/bfai).
Best Friends™ Online

There are several ways to learn about the Best Friends™ Approach and keep up with news, events, and new products:

http://bestfriends.healthpropress.com and www.healthpropress.com/training

An online Best Friends™ Portal (http://bestfriends.healthpropress.com) provides access to valuable background and information about this universally praised approach, including the Best Friends™ blog, forums for discussing Best Friends™ methods, information on the entire Best Friends™ product line—including bulk purchase options—and details on upcoming trainings and Institutes.

The Best Friends™ Portal is also the gateway for certified Best Friends™ Master Trainers to access exclusive training materials, tips, and tools. Master Trainers receive a login that enables them to access and download images, handouts, PowerPoint slides, and other helpful materials for use in their own training and staff development programs.

Customized Best Friends™ training is available to organizations that want to host their own workshops, conferences, or on-site staff development programs. Such events can be organized through HPP’s Specialized Expert Training program (S.E.T.; see description below) and accessed at www.healthpropress.com/training.

www.facebook.com/bestfriendsapproach

An active community of Best Friends™ advocates follow the Best Friends™ Facebook page, where up-to-date information on Alzheimer’s disease, caregiving, and aging-related topics can be found along with important news and events.

www.bestfriendsapproach.com

The Best Friends™ website serves as a vibrant platform for providing information about the authors’ travel, consultation, and speaking engagements. It also serves as a conduit for providing information about the Best Friends™ philosophy of dementia care to a broad, international audience of family and professional care partners. Visitors can find a variety of helpful materials as well as links to product resources and social media in which the authors participate.
Support for Use of the Best Friends™ Approach

Endorsements

“An outstanding guide for anyone involved in the care of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease. The Best Friends™ method is an innovative, sensitive and unique approach that can greatly improve the quality of life for patients with the most devastating disease known to man.”

William R. Markesbery, M.D., past director, Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center and Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, University of Kentucky

“Bell and Troxel ... argue persuasively that the proper metaphor for organizing our thinking in this area is not the distant clinical reserve of the professional but the open and engaged warmth of a best friend... [They] have written powerfully about this in their book.”

William H. Thomas, M.D., founder, The Eden Alternative

“Using the Best Friends approach... caregivers are provided with a wide range of practical tools and strategies for how to deal with the many challenges of coping with this difficult disease.”

Ken Dychtwald, Ph.D., CEO and founder of Age Wave

“The Best Friends book is my ‘go to’ resource for helping families and professionals caring for persons with dementia... [It] can turn around behaviors that are challenging, support good communication, and help care partners create a successful day.”

Elizabeth Edgerly, Ph.D., chief program officer, Northern CA & Northern NV Alzheimer’s Association

“I recommend the Best Friends approach to all my support group members. It’s so easy to understand and implement. The book is a great daily reference and a ‘caregiver bible’ that everyone should have.”

Rose Mary Jacobson, Community Outreach Coordinator, Alzheimer’s Association, Desert Southwest Chapter, Las Vegas, NV

“Our caregivers embrace the Best Friends™ philosophy every day, knowing that good care is about relationships and doing creative things together. This new book offers hundreds of life-affirming, creative ideas that family and professional caregivers can use at home. Highly recommended!”

Buck Shaw, Home Instead Senior Care, Sacramento, CA

“The authors’ approach contains a humanity and warmth that I wish could be present in every instance when a person with Alzheimer’s receives care.”

Wendy Lustbader, M.S.W., author of Counting on Kindness: The Dilemmas of Dependency
Endorsements (cont.)

“Virginia Bell & David Troxel are leaders in the field of aging. Their words will offer caregivers new ideas and new hope as they face the challenge of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.”

Gloria H. Cavanaugh, former President & CEO, American Society on Aging

“The Best Friends™ philosophy … has been adopted as a model throughout Maine and has become one of our most valuable caregiving resources. We’ve seen it in action and heartily recommend it!”

Eleanor Goldberg, past Executive Director, Maine Alzheimer’s Association

“Embracing the activity principles in the Best Friends model has helped us to capture the very essence of how activity programming should be for person-centered care. Our residents and staff have responded so positively to the Best Friends program that we have made Best Friends our road map to achieving excellence in dementia care.”

Jill Hess, L.M.S.W., A.C.S.W., former Vice President, Organizational Development, Heritage Community of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, MI

“A must read for all those who care for people with dementia. A Dignified Life is well written, packed with effective and practical advice, and full of humanity. It shows that there is much that can be done to help make the lives of both caregivers and people with dementia better and more fulfilling. I give it a 5-star rating.”

David Snowdon, Ph.D., Author of Aging with Grace and Director of the Nun Study

“Caregivers can easily become overwhelmed by the daily challenges facing them. The Best Friends approach will give you simple, easy to learn tools that can make the most daunting problems seems easier to cope with. I highly recommend this book.”

Elaine St. James, Author of the international book series, Simplify Your Life

“As a neurologist, I dream about the day that we will find a cure for Alzheimer’s disease. Until that time, the Best Friends approach is here to give families practical tools for bringing out the best in persons with Alzheimer’s disease. This is a well-written, insightful book that gives caregivers a life-affirming, practical framework for approaching this difficult disease. I recommend it to my patients and their families.”

Donna Masterman, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor, Neurology UCLA Medical Center, Clinical Core Director of the UCLA Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center

“Thousands of families have read this book. By putting into practice what they learned, they have discovered that much can be done to improve the lives of their loved ones.”

Lilia Mendoza, Founder, Federación Mexicana de Alzheimer
Published Reviews

“Iinnovative and refreshing due to the relaxed and natural ‘hands on’ approach - an empowering book that proves one can enjoy life after a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease.”

_Aging & Society_ (on _The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care_)

“One of the first, and still one of my favorites [positive, uplifting books on Alzheimer’s disease] ... easy to grasp and always respectful of the person with the disease.”

_Alzheimer’s Care Quarterly_ (on _The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care_)

“Here at last are two compassionate, humorous, experienced authors [Bell and Troxel] who say it’s time to stop being morbid and negative about AD. ...It’s the best training guide for families and professionals in print.”

_Wiser Now_ (on _The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care_)

“[Bell and Troxel] have laid out a way of relating that is immediately accessible to all involved in dementia and a policy and programme for service provision. ...Here is an initiative that is easy to understand and is within the immediate capacity of each of us to deliver.”

_Journal of Dementia Care_ (on _The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care_)

“...a potential gold mine for afflicted families.”

_Booklist_ (on _The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care_)

“a valuable addition to any day centre or care home wanting to develop understanding of activity as being much more than providing entertainment and outings.”

_Journal of Dementia Care_ (on _The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One_)

“a wonderful resource ... very practical for staff, volunteers, and family members. This book will be one of your most-used resources”

_Creative Forecasting® Magazine_ (on _The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One_)

“A ‘grab and go’ book that was written to assist an activity director to take an everyday activity and turn it into something creative and meaningful. [The book] presents activity principles which are essential in developing programs that are appropriate and creative in maintaining dignity and quality of life.”

_The Director_ (on _The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One_)

“This collection of activities will add both meaning and enjoyment — Individuals with dementia, staff, and family members will enjoy the fresh ideas. ... _The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume Two_ is extremely helpful, and a book that you will reference often. Individuals with dementia, staff, and family members will enjoy the fresh ideas for creative art projects, interactive games, and evening activities . . .”

_Creative Forecasting® Magazine_ (on _The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume Two_)
**Research and Studies**

The Best Friends™ philosophy of care has been successfully applied in many caregiving settings and evaluated on a program-by-program basis.

An Administration on Aging (AoA) funded study (Danner & McGuire, 2010, *Alzheimer’s Care Today*) compared adult day center staff who were trained in the Best Friends™ approach to staff members without Best Friends™ training and found that introduction of this model of care for individuals with dementia not only was valuable but also delayed long-term residential placements.

Study results included the following: “When asked specific questions related to the effectiveness of the program in making participants feel cheerful, energetic, content, lively, and anticipatory, [the study center] received higher ratings on all items [than the control center]. Similarly, when asked how effective the program was in minimizing the negative responses of anxiety, frustration, distress, irritation, and feeling of being fed up, [the study center] received much higher ratings in all categories” (p. 240).

In 2008, as American Baptist Homes of the West (ABHOW) sought CARF-CCAC accreditation, it announced its decision to partner with David Troxel for guidance in the implementation of the Best Friends™ model of care so that its participating memory care units could secure accreditation in dementia care (see entry under Licensed Uses later in this report). ABHOW was the first multi-site company in the U.S. to seek such accreditation for a dementia care program. Its memory care units earned some of the highest scores in the evaluation process.

A 2006 survey conducted by the Alzheimer Society of Calgary, a licensed provider of Best Friends™ training to professional caregivers since 2003, concluded: “Evaluation results demonstrate how the Best Friends™ Approach Associate Trainer Program achieved positive results toward effecting change within organizations concerned with improving the quality of life of people with dementia” and “100% of respondents stated that the Best Friends™ Approach has improved the delivery of care to persons with dementia.”

In 2005, as the Alzheimer’s Association launched its Campaign for Quality Residential Care, co-director Peter Reed was quoted as having been inspired to launch the initiative after having volunteered under Virginia Bell and sharing a commitment to the Best Friends™ key element to “know the person first.”

A 2002 evaluation study of Best Friends™ training in Maine reported results from 23 of 25 pilot-site participants including: staff felt more comfortable with communicating with residents with Alzheimer’s disease after training and reported that residents seem less stressed; a number of facilities incorporated Best Friends™ principles into their orientation programs; pilot sites noticed a distinct difference in the positive way training participants interacted with residents compared to staff who did not take the training; and families felt more involved in the ongoing care of their loved one and appreciated that staff were looking for new ways to help.
Media Coverage

Virginia Bell, David Troxel, and the Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care have captured the interest of journalists and freelance writers, and stories of the value of Best Friends™ care have been featured in numerous articles and interviews by reporters for a range of print and other media. Some of these features have appeared in NBC Nightly News, the Los Angeles Times, The Sacramento Bee, Lexington Herald-Leader, Lincoln Journal Star, Kentucky Public Radio, KV1 Radio Seattle, and numerous local media outlets and educational radio/television stations. Additionally, a variety of newsletters and magazines have featured articles on the Best Friends™ approach and reprinted excerpts from the books, including the Journal of Active Aging, Alzheimer’s Care Quarterly, The American Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias, and Caring magazine.

Professional Development

Specialized Expert Training (S.E.T.)

Based on a customized approach and named Specialized Expert Training, or simply S.E.T., this program enables delivery of relevant, high-quality staff development and training to customers and prospective customers in a model that brings the professional development experience to the door of the client at the time they need it and for the purposes they articulate. The flexibility of the model enables HPP to design training events in collaboration with authors that can be tailored to individual customer needs. Experienced speakers teach participants effective practices for healthcare and long-term care settings, guide them through an activity program, or help them utilize proven management strategies.

HPP authors develop their trainings directly around the content of their books, the research behind their work, and their experiences in the field. The Best Friends™ approach has been one of the most sought-after topics in the S.E.T. program. The authors/speakers offer training in the following formats.

**Customized Trainings:** Clients determine the venue for the training event and the professional development priorities for the participants. Common topics include the core elements of the Best Friends™ approach, staff training, and culture change. Clients contact HPP to arrange the training, and HPP staff in turn share the request with one of the Best Friends™ speakers and coordinate the three-way development of recommendations that will help meet the needs of the client group. Best Friends™ trainings can range from keynotes and professional presentations to events of a few hours to a few days, depending on the topics to be covered and staff and program needs.

**Samples of Best Friends™ professional development include:**

**Introduction to Best Friends™:** This inspirational presentation teaches participants how to care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease using the Best Friends™ approach. Caregivers learn to integrate the essential elements of friendship—respect, empathy, trust, and humor—into their care techniques.

**Staff training:** This workshop will help care communities enhance the quality of their dementia care programs and develop an effective, satisfied staff. Best Friends™ authors present a training approach designed to help staff achieve better outcomes and more rewarding experiences.

**Activities programming:** This interactive training demonstrates how to introduce meaningful engagements into the day and create activities in the moment. Participants learn communication and conversation tips, how to use songs and musical tie-ins, how to create intergenerational activities, and ideas for unprogrammed times, including evenings.

**Best Friends™ Approach Institutes:** S.E.T. also hosts 2-day professional development training institutes for Master Trainer certification in the Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care. These events are typically scheduled annually and held in a major metropolitan area in the U.S. Attendees enjoy an intensive professional development experience with interactive training, the
opportunity for one-on-one exchange with the Best Friends™ expert leaders, and networking with others engaged in similar work from a broad range of settings and backgrounds. The mix makes for a responsive learning environment conducive to a concentrated focus on Best Friends™ strategies. See the following section on Master Trainer certification.

Post-seminar evaluation forms tell the story:

“From start to finish perfect! . . . David was validating, passionate, and extremely knowledgeable!”
–Jessica Corbien, Victoria Order of Nurses

“Virginia and David are so passionate and intelligent. Very inspiring… It reminds me of why I love my ‘calling’ [of] dementia care.”
–Jami Schell, R.N., B.S.N., Health/Wellness Dir., Leisure Care, Mackenzie Place Asst’ed Living

“Interactive, open environment… This is a great training experience.”
–Margaret Moody, Program Associate, Alzheimer’s Association, Western Carolina Chapter

“I liked the humor and the reality… I learned a great deal.”
–Jennifer Garner, R.N., Director of Health & Wellness, Leisure Care

“Virginia and Tonya left me wanting more! Their vast knowledge was inspiring…Tonya is now on my (short) list of teachers who have influenced me.”
–Melody Malec, Immanuel Communities

“A game changer for those caring for persons with dementia.”
–Scott Tame, Regional Director of Operations, SeniorCare

“This is one of the best learning experiences I have been able to attend.”
–Jennifer Willis, Regional Nurse Consultant, Americare

“[David] has real hands-on experience in both the field and his personal life and was easy to relate to as a result.”
–Allison Fletcher, Victoria Order of Nurses

“Very relevant to our work, easy to use—we can all do it.”
–Michelle Reid, Simcoe County

“A great training – the best I’ve been to. The trainers are well educated and send you home with excitement to roll out this approach as soon as you get back to work.”
–Tracy Plonsky, LSW, Friendship Village of Bloomington

“Best training of 20 years in nursing!”
–Jerry Poluka, Heartland Village Leader, Elmcroft Senior Living
Best Friends™ Master Trainer Certification

Master Trainer certification is conferred on qualified individuals who demonstrate mastery of “train-the-trainer” training taught by a Best Friends Expert Leader. Training focuses not only on Best Friends™ principles and practices, but also knowledge of adult learning principles and demonstrated instructional ability.

Caregiving communities that invest in the professional development of staff for Master Trainer certification gain the ability to associate with the Best Friends™ name and its respected brand; each location at which a Master Trainer is based may use the designation “Best Friends™ Environment.”

Eligible Master Trainers (e.g., those who are self-employed) may qualify to conduct income-generating introductory trainings in the Best Friends™ model. This option is designed for independent dementia trainers and consultants who wish to distinguish themselves as a source of expert training in personalized, holistic dementia care and to be confident of providing training and consultation in the highest quality of care for people being served with dementia. For more information, write to bestfriends@healthpropress.com.

Rigorous training requirements must be met before Master Trainer status is conferred, and ongoing monitoring and renewal ensures maintenance of high-level implementation and fidelity to the model of care. Master Trainer certification instruction is offered through the annual Best Friends™ Approach Institute (described above). For groups of 11 or more, please contact bestfriends@healthpropress.com to discuss discounts and/or alternative training options.

For more information, Guidelines on Master Trainer certification are available at www.healthpropress.com/bfai, or they may be requested by writing to bestfriends@healthpropress.com or Best Friends™ Master Trainer Certification, Health Professions Press, P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624.
Products

The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., and David Troxel, M.P.H.

This is the seminal volume on the Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care. This groundbreaking, comprehensive program builds on the essential elements of friendship: respect, empathy, support, trust, humor. Offering the building blocks of a care model that is both effective and flexible, the Best Friends™ approach encourages adaptation to each person’s remaining strengths and abilities. Readers learn how to ensure the highest quality of life for people with Alzheimer’s disease, not just by preventing catastrophic episodes but by making every day consistently reassuring, enjoyable, and secure.


Spanish edition: The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care has been translated by the respected Spanish/Mexican publisher Editorial Herder. The founder of the Mexican Alzheimer’s Society, Lilia Mendoza, has not only endorsed this book but also written the introduction for the Spanish edition. Los Mejores Amigos en el Cuidado de Alzheimer is sold in the U.S. and Canada by Health Professions Press.


The Best Friends Staff
Building a Culture of Care in Alzheimer’s Programs
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., and David Troxel, M.P.H.

The Best Friends™ approach to Alzheimer’s care improves the quality of life not only for persons with Alzheimer’s disease but also for the staff providing care. Virginia Bell and David Troxel, recognized internationally for their innovative work, have applied their years of experience to a training approach geared to help staff achieve better outcomes and more rewarding experiences—and help programs retain an effective, satisfied staff.

The book’s examples from real staff around the world show how care communities are implementing the Best Friends™ approach with residents and families. The Best Friends Staff will provide the inspiration and working tools to transform a care culture by providing:

- hundreds of case studies illustrating successful programs
- creative ideas to use to implement change
- a “toolkit” in each chapter with learning exercises, activities, games, and resources
- proven advice on staff training and retention

Readers familiar with this book will be able to not only help staff make every day consistently reassuring, enjoyable, and secure for people with Alzheimer’s disease, but also make their work environment more rewarding for themselves.

$44.99  Stock #12636 (ISBN 978-1-878812-63-6)  296 pages  7” x 10”  papercover © 2001
The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One

with 147 versatile, easy-to-implement Best Friends™ activities
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., David Troxel, M.P.H., Robin Hamon, M.S.W., and Tonya Cox, M.S.W.

Using the Best Friends™ approach to activities, any member of a program’s care staff can turn the simplest interaction with a person with dementia into an engagement that satisfies essential physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. The versatile, easy-to-implement Best Friends™ activities in The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume One, teach “the art of being together” and help transform the activity programming at a nursing facility, adult day center, assisted living facility, or home care setting. Staff, participants, and family members will all benefit.

Included are:

- formal and informal activities, with innumerable variations
- communication and conversation tips
- suggested songs and musical tie-ins
- adaptations for people in the early and late stages of Alzheimer’s disease
- activities for unprogrammed time, including evenings
- ideas especially for men
- opportunities for intergenerational exchanges
- preventive measures to avoid unwanted surprises
- reminders of the spiritual benefits inherent in good activities

Planning activities for people with dementia may seem challenging, but this first volume of The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities shows how easy and natural it can be.

$38.99  Stock #12889 (ISBN 978-1-878812-88-9)  224 pages  8 1/2” x 11”  papercover  © 2004

The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume Two

with 149 more ideas for creative engagements
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., David Troxel, M.P.H., Robin Hamon, M.S.W., and Tonya Cox, M.S.W.

Volume Two includes 149 all-new activities for individuals with dementia. Like the first book, this collection of versatile engagements adds both meaning and enjoyment to the activities at adult day centers, home care settings, or residential care facilities. Feedback and insights from individuals with early-stage dementia helped shape this new collection, as well as activity suggestions from national and international dementia programs that provide an enhanced focus on diversity and multiculturalism. Also featured are topics of interest to participants in their 50s and 60s, such as the Internet, advocacy, and community service. Participants, staff, and family members will find fresh ideas for creative art projects, interactive games, and evening activities.

New themes to explore in Volume Two include:

- activities related to the kitchen and food
- life story sharing and reminiscence
- religious and spiritual traditions
- wellness

Adaptations for people in the early and late stages of Alzheimer’s disease, preventive measures to avoid unwanted surprises, and conversation tips make these activities particularly versatile.

Best Friends DVD
Produced by the Greater Kentucky/Southern Indiana Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association

This touching 20-minute DVD profiles a model adult day program that is built around the Best Friends™ approach, showing its impact on participants, staff, volunteers, and families. This video footage is a moving introduction to the innovative Best Friends™ approach to caring for persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. $54.95  Stock #29494 (ISBN 978-1-932529-49-4) 20-minute DVD

The Best Friends Daily Planner
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., and David Troxel, M.P.H.

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A Dignified Life, Revised & Expanded
The Best Friends™ Approach to Alzheimer’s Care—A Guide for Care Partners
By Virginia Bell, M.S.W., and David Troxel, M.P.H.

Recognizing the unique needs of family caregivers, the authors of The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care have re-written their classic book just for these readers. Illustrated through real, heartfelt stories, A Dignified Life shows how the Best Friends™ method can bring dignity to the lives of both those who have Alzheimer’s disease and those who care for them using creative and effective communication and meaningful activities. This optimistic book is an indispensable resource for all family members and friends caring for someone with Alzheimer’s disease. A Dignified Life is a collaborative trade adaptation between Health Professions Press and Health Communications, Inc., the publisher of the original line of Chicken Soup for the Soul books. $16.95 Stock #16694 (ISBN 978-0-31665-4) 284 pages 5½” x 8½” papercover ©2012

A Dignified Life is a publication of Health Communications, Inc. (Toll-free: 800-441-5569 / Online: www.hcibooks.com)

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The following items are appealing supplements for incorporating Best Friends™ into your programming for staff. Contact bestfriends@healthpropress.com for more information.

Best Friends™ Tote Bag
Featuring the Best Friends™ logo in silver on a black background, this durable and attractive tote bag advertises your commitment to providing the best possible dementia care wherever you go. Use it yourself or provide it in recognition to your best performing staff. A roomy, zippered main compartment can hold and protect a laptop and supplies. The bag also features an interior zippered pocket and an outer compartment with easily accessible pen and phone pockets. The 22" long, 2" wide carrying handles provide comfort and ease of use.

Best Friends™ T-Shirts
A simple but effective way for staff to show that they believe it takes Best Friends™ to provide the best care for people with Alzheimer’s disease is to wear the Best Friends™ logo. These high-quality cotton T-shirts feature the logo design in striking kelly green and royal blue.
Translations

In addition to selling in the English language throughout the world via distributors located in the U.K., Canada, Australia, South and Central America, Asia, India, and the Middle East, the Best Friends™ books have garnered the attention of publishers from around the world responding to the international interest in and adoption of the Best Friends™ approach. Translation rights have been licensed for numerous foreign language editions of these titles from the Best Friends™ product line.

To date, translations include:

The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer’s Care
- Arabic (first-ever Alzheimer’s book in Arabic, published by Alzheimer’s Association Lebanon)
- German (Ernst Reinhardt Verlag)
- Italian (Armando Editore)
- Spanish (Editorial Herder Mexico)

The Best Friends Staff
- German (Ernst Reinhardt Verlag)

The Best Friends Book of Alzheimer’s Activities, Volume 1
- German (Ernst Reinhardt Verlag)

A Dignified Life
- Korean (HCI and Montreal-Contacts/The Rights Agency)
- Chinese (HCI and PsyGarden Publishing, Taiwan)

The Original Alzheimer’s Disease Bill of Rights

Translated into Arabic, Cantonese, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, and many more languages. These translations have appeared in numerous newsletters, journals, web site pages, and conference materials worldwide.
Licensed Uses

Across the U.S. and Canada, and even in other countries, state-level programs, health care agencies, and individual corporations have sought and been granted permission by Health Professions Press to create special programs featuring the Best Friends™ approach. Groups are encouraged to contact HPP if they are interested in exploring opportunities to customize initiatives using the Best Friends™ work and materials. The association of an organization’s program with the Best Friends™ brand can augment the high quality of the program’s offering, enhance outcomes for staff and families, and add to the attractiveness of the program for consumers.

Past and present ways in which respected programs have applied the Best Friends™ approach in their initiatives after entering into agreements with HPP are briefly described below. Contact HPP (see final page) if you are interested in licensing Best Friends™ products or services.

State of Oregon (Senior & Disabled Services Division, Department of Human Resources)

✓ Statewide initiative to train nursing home staff; included premium book sales customized by HPP, permission to develop program-specific training manuals as adapted by the authors from the original Best Friends™ works, and merchandising rights to use the Best Friends™ logo.

State of Maine (Office of Elder Services, Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Maine Alzheimer’s Association)

✓ Statewide training offered to nursing homes; written into Maine’s State Plan on Aging; additional licensing of permission for Best Friends™ logo use on staff clothing.

Alzheimer Society of Calgary, Canada

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Greater Illinois Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association

✓ License, by an Alzheimer’s Association chapter, to create a 12-part staff training program offered through its Professional Training Institute using training materials adapted from Best Friends™ and co-created with the Best Friends™ developers.
Elmcroft Senior Living

✓ This provider of assisted living and memory care services in various U.S. locations licenses use of the Best Friends™ brand and trade and service marks and has earned permission to label their Communities as “following the Best Friends™ Model of Care” in association with maintaining Best Friends™ Master Trainer certification among designated staff.

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Atria Senior Living Group

✓ Customized adaptation of the Best Friends™ activities books was produced in collaboration with the Best Friends™ authors, HPP, and Atria Senior Living, a nationwide provider of independent and assisted living communities, for exclusive use in Atria’s Life Guidance neighborhoods in support of residents with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

H. Lundbeck A/S (Pharmaceuticals), Australia

✓ The Australian division of this global pharmaceutical company secured permission and purchased customized reprints of the Best Friends™ activity books (both volumes) to use as educational “premiums” for client distribution.

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