**Tips for Visiting Virtually**

This is not easy. You want to hold their hand or give them a hug. But now this may be harder on you than on them.

Unless you are writing a letter or sending a card, any technology you use is new to your loved one. I remember handing my smart phone to my Mom for her to talk to my brother and she held it and turned it over and was like what is this? When I showed her to just hood it up like a phone, she got it, but I needed to stay in the room because once in a while she would get tired of holding it and I would hold it for her. We tried speaker phone and that seemed even more confusing for her but it may not be for your loved one.

Before you call think about why are you calling? You probably want them to know you are thinking of them and for you to know they’re okay.

* **Be prepared for the conversation.**
* **Have a good attitude**
* Start the call with **who you are** and you are happy to see them. “ Hi Mom, it’s your daughter Nancy. You look good. I am happy to see your beautiful face.”
* **Be patient.** Wait for them to answer. Don’t try and answer for them.
* **Keep it short.** Depending on where your loved one is in their dementia their attention span may be short. It’s okay. Be happy you were able to see them.
* **Stay away from questions.** Unless the person is very early in their dementia they won’t remember what they had for lunch or what they did that day. If you want to ask something focus on the present moment, such as:

“What’s outside your window right now?”

* **Go with the flow.** If your Mom is confused about Facetiming and walks away from the phone, but you get to see that she is okay, then be happy with that. If your Mom sees something in the background of your call and just focuses on that then go with the flow and show her that on the screen and talk about what she wants to talk about.

**Did or Does your loved one like to…**

**…Cook?** How reading one of their favorite recipes that they used to make? Show them the picture of it from the cookbook

**…Go to church?**

Read some scriptures to them. Or sing together a favorite hymn. Or Pray.

**…See Granchildren?** Maybe show pictures they drew. Don’t expect your loved one to know who they are but use it as a conversation starter.

…**Read a particular magazine?** Reader’s Digest or Field & Stream? Can you read something from that?

**Issues that may arise**

* How to respond if your Mom says “Are you coming today?”
* If your Dad is Zooming with you and your siblings and he is overwhelmed by so many people. Take turns connecting with Dad, each of you taking a different day of the week.