

## Email Template: Sharing Information [Decline in Condition]

Dear Family & Friends,

**[Start out with enthusiasm, or at least as much enthusiasm as you can muster→]** We are so excited you're going to be visiting us for the holidays! I realize it's been a while since our last visit, so I want to catch you up to speed about what's going on in our world.

**[Acknowledge how it used to be, and how it's different now→]** Joe really used to enjoy our traditional big Christmas Eve open house blowouts, but now because of the dementia, he gets really anxious when he's around more than a handful of familiar people at a time. **[Give a concrete example→]** He does great for about an hour, but after that he starts getting really fidgety. **[Describe the consequence of not doing it the way you've outlined→]** I've found that if we don't pull the plug when he starts getting fidgety, things go downhill very quickly. **[Acknowledge the emotional impact→]** It's sad to see Joe acting so differently than he used to, and **[This is called "assuming the sale" →]** I know you understand I have to protect Joe's dignity and not let him get into a situation that could compromise that.

**[Add another example or two of changes→]** A couple of other noticeable changes are that Joe seems to do best when he has a routine he can count on, and he gets irritable when he's asked more than a couple of questions in a row. In order to accommodate Joe's routine, we're going to serve Christmas Eve dinner at 5:00 p.m. and wrap it up no later than 7. **[List a positive and describe how your family/friends can successfully handle a particular situation→]** I know Joe would get a kick out of hearing how you and your family are; he does really well when you make clear, concise statements while you're maintaining eye contact and giving him extra time to process what you've said. **[Note how this is worded so it's about Joe; not you→]** It really helps him understand if only one person talks at a time.

**[Reiterate how this is going to happen and end on a positive note→]** We look forward to seeing you promptly at 5, and of course I'll have your favorite pumpkin pie on hand :)

Safe travels!  
xo Christy

## Email Template: Sharing Information [Move into Memory Care]

Dear Family & Friends,

**[Start out with gratitude, setting the tone→]** Joe and I are so grateful for your friendship over the years. We love you all but realize it's been a while since we've last seen or chatted with you, so I want to catch you up to speed about what's going on in our world.

**[Acknowledge how it used to be, and how it's different now→]** As you know, Joe was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease 9 years ago. As expected, the Alzheimer's has had a slow and steady progression over the years.

Although Joe is still the same whip smart delightful guy he's always been, it's increasingly difficult for him to readily recall words and memories or to know what to do without gentle guidance and cues.

He also gets really anxious when he's around more than a handful of familiar people at a time. **[Give a concrete example→]** Recently, Joe felt so overwhelmed and disoriented at a gathering, he slipped out the side door.

**[Describe the plan→]** We're so grateful first responders found Joe, unharmed, within an hour. Because Joe's safety and wellbeing are my first priority, Joe has moved into Super Awesome Memory Care Community on Main Street. **[Acknowledge the emotional impact→]** Although this was a day I dreaded, I'm grateful he's in a safe place where he's also happy and making a good adjustment. You can call Super Awesome directly to ask about a good time for a visit.

**[This is called "assuming the sale" where you let folks know how you want to handle this and what their response should be →]** I know you understand this is a very emotional topic and something I'm not able to casually discuss in the produce aisle or in line at the Starbucks. For that reason, until I've had time to adjust to this new reality, I appreciate you *not* asking how I am or how things are going.

**[List a positive and describe how your family/friends can successfully handle a particular situation→]** I know Joe would love to see you, even if he doesn't seem to know your name or recognize you. He does really well when you make clear, concise statements while you're maintaining eye contact and giving him extra time to process what you've said. **[Note how this is worded so it's about Joe; not you→]** Another great way to support Joe is to learn some dementia communication techniques; I found XYZ Resource **[link to resources]** and ABC Resource particularly helpful.

**[Reiterate how this is going to work and end on a positive note→]** I appreciate your understanding and respecting my privacy, and we're both so grateful you'll continue to visit Joe in his new home.

xo Christy

## Email Template: Sharing Information [New Diagnosis]

Dear Family & Friends,

**[Start out with gratitude, setting the tone→]** Joe and I are so grateful for your friendship over the years. We love you all but realize it's been a while since we've last seen or chatted with many of you, so I want to catch you up to speed about what's going on in our world.

**[Acknowledge how it used to be, and how it's different now→]** As you know, Joe and I have always loved having our friends and family in our home for holidays, special occasions, and for no particular reason at all.

You may have noticed we've been hosting less and less over the last year or so. Joe was becoming increasingly uncomfortable and just didn't seem like himself during these events. This, coupled with some other indicators, ultimately led us to a recent diagnosis: Joe has Alzheimer's disease.

**[Describe the plan→]** As you can no doubt imagine, we're still processing this information and trying to figure out the impact. We're disclosing Joe's diagnosis because we didn't want you to wonder what's going on--we know it's been different in this past year or so.

That said, **[Acknowledge the emotional impact→]** this isn't something we've completely wrapped our heads around. We need some time to hunker down with each other and get our feet under us.

**[This is called "assuming the sale" where you let folks know how you want to handle this and what their response should be →]** I know you understand this is a very emotional topic and something we're not able to casually discuss in the produce aisle or in line at the Starbucks. For that reason, until we've had time to adjust to this new reality, we appreciate you *not* asking about it when we're together.

**[List a positive and describe how your family/friends can successfully handle a particular situation→]** Joe is still the same awesome guy he's always been--he just can't handle hosting a Super Bowl party for 60 of our rowdiest friends anymore. **[Note how this is worded so it's about Joe; not you→]** A great way to support Joe and me is to learn some dementia communication techniques; I found XYZ Resource **[link to resources]** and ABC Resource particularly helpful.

**[Reiterate how this is going to work and end on a positive note→]** We appreciate your understanding and respecting our privacy, and we're so grateful you'll continue to treat Joe just like you always have: as your valued friend.

xo Christy & Joe