



# **Joy for All Companion Pets Guide for Family Caregivers**

## What are Joy for All Companion Pets?

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Robotic companion pets offer an alternative to traditional pet therapy, and research shows them to have similar positive effects. Ageless Innovations' Joy for All Companion Pets cats and dogs are designed with soft fur that feels real and sensors that respond to motion, touch, and sound, allowing them to react and interact. The cat purrs, meows, and moves its leg, ears, head, and torso in reaction to touch, much like an actual cat. The dog barks when spoken to, wags his tail, nuzzles, turns his head toward sound, and its heart beats when petted.

## Your Family Member Living with Dementia:

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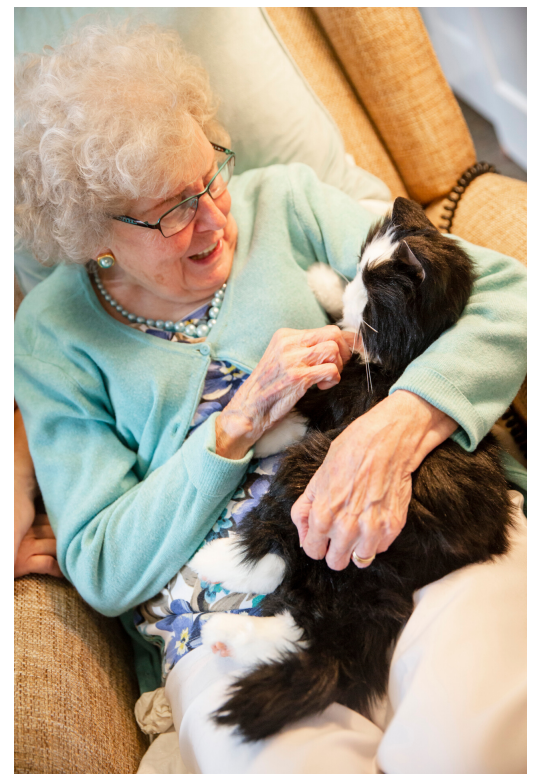
Is capable of experiencing well-being.

Well-being is generally thought of as being comfortable, healthy, or happy. People with dementia have trouble creating well-being for themselves. Companion Pets help create a sense of well-being.

Retains abilities throughout the disease.

Each person with dementia has capabilities that don't weaken, no matter the stage of dementia. Your loved one can:

- Love, feel, think, respond, play, sense, and have relationships.
- Experience human emotions.
- Express human emotions.
- Respond to music.
- Access memories of long ago.
- Respond to nature.
- Recognize facial expressions and gestures.
- Understand the meaning of human touch.



## How Might my Family Member Benefit?

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- Increases interaction with others and the surroundings
- Connects to memories of family pets
- Decreases anxiety and agitation
- Uplifts mood
- Stimulates the senses

## What is the Best Way to Introduce the Pet to My Loved One?

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1. Hold the Pet like you would if it were real.
2. Approach from the front, getting into eyeshot.
3. Draw his attention to the Pet, placing it so he can see it.
4. Ask, "What do you think of this?" or "Look what I have." Be neutral. When introducing the Pet, don't present it as real or not real. Let your loved one decide. If she doesn't see the Pet as real, don't try to convince her that it is.



Encourage Interaction: You might ask:

- Would you hold him for me?
- What should we call this cat (dog)?
- What do you think he's thinking right now?
- Did you have a cat (dog) when you were growing up? What was his name? What did he look like?
- Do you like cats or dogs better?
- Share a brief story about something funny that cats (dogs) do. Ask if she has a funny story, too.



## How can I Tell how My Loved One Feels about the Pet?

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It might be difficult to recognize how your loved one is feeling.

Positive signs tell you she is engaged and reacting to the Pet in a way that fosters well-being and makes use of remaining abilities.

- Smiles or expression brightens when he first sees the Pet.
- Says, "Hi, kitty/puppy!"
- Responds when the Pet meows or barks or moves.
- Strokes, pats, or holds the Pet.
- Holds a give-and-take conversation with the Pet.
- Looks alert and bright-eyed, smiles, laughs.
- Takes care of the Pet by combing it, attempting to feed it, giving it rides on a walker, etc.

Negative signs tell you that he is not engaged and experiencing feelings that create a lower state of well-being. The reaction can be verbal or physical.

- Pushes Pet away.
- Becomes upset or anxious.
- Shows no interest, or is too tired to engage attention.
- Needs repeated prompting to acknowledge the Pet.



## How Should I Clean the Companion Pet?

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Proper cleaning is essential to avoid damaging the electronics inside and to ensure safe handling.

Cleaning soiled fur:

1. Spray the soiled area with Dapple cleaner (or similar non-toxic product) and gently wipe with a clean towel. Repeat if needed.
2. Let fur dry.
3. Brush fur with Companion Pet brush.

General disinfecting:

1. Wipe fur with Sani-Wipes.
2. Let fur dry.
3. Brush fur with Companion Pet brush.

DO NOT soak the fur or place under running water.