

# Being Honest about Lying!!

I learned so many new things as a caregiver for someone with dementia. Things I never had given much thought to before. Things that I never hoped I would need to learn. Behaviors and skills that seemed almost to go against who I was.

One was a biggie called "therapeutic fibbing". When I first heard this term, I was more than confused. Basically, it means telling little white lies or partial truths to your loved one who has Alzheimer's/Dementia. That was totally against my belief system, and it seemed to go against my principles. But I began to do it. A lot.

When Bob would ask me if he could go to my house for lunch (when we were in our house), I would tell him that I was out of food, and it would be best that we stay at his house (which was our house) and have lunch. It was much easier than trying to convince him that I didn't live elsewhere. He was satisfied. A lie? In a way.

Once Bob didn't drive and had actually had his license taken away, he would ask where his car or his car keys were. Instead of rehashing that he didn't have a car or license anymore, I would tell him that the car was getting a repair taken care of or getting detailed or a friend had borrowed it. I just made up a new story each time he asked. He was satisfied. A lie? In a way.

Bob told the story about all the baseball hats he had. He claimed his parents threw a party for him when he played football for the Chargers (I must have missed that era!). Bob claimed that everyone brought him a hat and that's where his baseball hat collection came from. I agreed and said it was a grand party indeed. He was satisfied. A lie? In a way.

Sometimes Bob would think that an old boss or work associate

was joining us for a meeting, and we needed to get to the meeting place. Often it was a story about it being the police chief or a higher up who needed his help on a big case. Instead of explaining that none of this was happening, I would agree and load Bob up in the car and head somewhere for lunch. Sometimes he would forget about the meeting he was supposedly having by the time we got to the restaurant. If he was still going on and on about the meeting with the police officer, I would secretly talk to the waitress and ask her to come tell Bob that he had just gotten a phone call and the police officer wasn't able to come and he would be in touch for another meeting. He was satisfied. A lie? In a way.

Another lesson learned was that there is no blame or guilt once someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's/Dementia. You can't be so hard on yourself for your behaviors and actions. You just have to give yourself grace. I can't compare being a caregiver to someone with dementia to any other types of caregiving, but I am sure there is no easy caregiving job. I just know in our situation that there were many times that I didn't handle Bob's caregiving with tender loving care. I am sure there were times that I did not look at him with love in my eyes. I'm sure there were times that my voice was harsh and my words were mean. I am sure there were times when my prayers were more for me than for him. Do I regret these things? Do I blame myself or have guilt? No, I don't.

***Now that's the biggest lie yet. Of course, I do***



*Me and Bob's 4 children wearing Bob's most favorite hats!*

*5 of the Great-Grands wearing Grandpa Bob's hats!*