Checklist: Your path to a day care center

Day care centers offer older people structure, social contact, care, and above all: Participation in life. They also relieve the burden on relatives, who often juggle multiple roles between family, work, and caregiving. We have put together a checklist for you regarding day care centers:

1. Recognize and address needs

- Observe changes in your relatives' everyday lives (e.g., withdrawal, loneliness, loss of structure).
- Talk openly about your observations — gently and without pressure.
- Be aware that the desire for support is not a sign of weakness.

2. Gather information

- Find out about day care centers in your area: The services are organized by different providers. Visit the websites of organizations, such as CS Caritas Socialis or Hilfswerk in Austria. IG Pflege (www.ig-pflege.at) offers a very good overview.
- In the case of dementia: Clarify whether the service is suitable for people with dementia.
- Check opening hours, services, transport options, costs, and subsidies.

3. Get in touch

- Call the day care center or send an email.
- Arrange a no-obligation **introductory meeting** on site — ideally together with your relative.

4. Get to know the day center

- Visit the day center together for an initial introduction.
- Ask for an explanation of the daily routine: Daily structure, activities, meals, support.
- Ask specifically about support services for relatives.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to attend a **trial day**. The day is designed to give you an insight into everyday life at the center – with no obligation.

5. Make a decision together

- After the trial day, talk to your relative about the impressions.
- Discuss together whether regular participation is desirable and appropriate.
- If necessary, plan another trial day or a gradual familiarization period.

6. Organize formal registration

- Fill out the registration form together with the center.
- Clarify transportation options and any additional payments.

7. Establish regularity

- Start with one or two days a week – according to your wishes and capacity.
- Observe how your relative's well-being develops.
- Stay in close contact with the day care center.

8. Caregiving relatives: Take your own relief seriously

- Make conscious use of your free time for relaxation or your own needs.
- Find out about additional services for relatives (counseling, self-help groups, home visits).
- Allow yourself to accept support – you don't have to do everything on your own.