



# Jealousy & Paranoia Response Guide

## A Quick Support Sheet for Dementia Caregivers

### When Suspicion or Jealousy Starts Rising

If your loved one is accusing you of:

- Hiding something
- Talking to someone you “shouldn’t”
- Being unfaithful
- Plotting against them
- Replacing them or abandoning them

Pause.

This is not a character attack.

This is a fear response in a damaged perception system.

Your goal is not to prove innocence.

Your goal is to lower fear.

### STEP 1: Check Safety First

Ask yourself quietly:

- Is there physical aggression?
- Is exit access blocked?
- Are voices escalating?
- Is this different from their usual pattern?

If safety feels compromised, prioritize space and medical support.

### WHAT TO SAY (Short & Calm)

Keep it brief. Slow. Repetitive if needed.

- ✓ “You sound worried.”
- ✓ “I’m here.”
- ✓ “You’re safe.”
- ✓ “I care about you.”
- ✓ “Let’s sit together.”
- ✓ “I’m not going anywhere.”

Use the same phrase consistently. Familiar language reduces escalation.

### WHAT NOT TO SAY

Avoid:

- ✗ “That’s ridiculous.”
- ✗ “Why would you think that?”
- ✗ “You’re being paranoid.”
- ✗ “I would never do that.” (long defense)
- ✗ “You’re wrong.”

Logic feels threatening when someone is in a paranoid state.

### STEP 2: Reduce Triggers

Common triggers include:

- Phone calls

- Text notifications
- Leaving the house
- Social media
- Visitors
- Fatigue
- Dim lighting
- Overstimulation

Consider:

- ✓ Taking calls privately
- ✓ Keeping explanations short
- ✓ Turning off notification sounds
- ✓ Maintaining predictable routines
- ✓ Limiting evening stimulation

This is not surrender.

It is nervous system management.

### STEP 3: Keep Explanations Simple

Instead of detailed justification, try:

- “I’m stepping out for an hour. I’ll be back.”
- “This is my friend.”
- “I’m making a quick call.”

Short. Neutral. Calm.

Length increases confusion.

### STEP 4: Capgras Reset (If Misidentification Is Present)

If they believe you are not really you:

- ✓ Adjust lighting
- ✓ Step out briefly and re-enter

- ✓ Change something small (jacket, glasses, hairstyle)
- ✓ Speak gently before approaching
- ✓ Avoid sudden movements

Misidentification is neurological — not personal rejection.

### QUICK DE-ESCALATION PLAN

1. Lower your voice.
2. Slow your breathing.
3. Remove background noise.
4. Offer reassurance.
5. Redirect gently (music, tea, simple task).

Do not rush the calming process.

### WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

Seek medical guidance if:

- Paranoia escalates suddenly
- Aggression appears
- Sleep disappears
- Accusations intensify rapidly
- Behavior changes abruptly
- Infection is suspected

Sudden changes often signal medical triggers.

### A NOTE ABOUT YOUR WORLD

If jealousy has led you to:

- Stop seeing friends

- Stop attending church
- Avoid phone conversations
- Isolate yourself
- Walk on eggshells constantly

That is heavy.

You are allowed to seek:

- ✓ Private support
- ✓ Respite care
- ✓ Counseling
- ✓ Safe conversation spaces

Caregiving does not require you to disappear.

### *A Gentle Reminder*

**Paranoia in Lewy Body Dementia is not moral judgment.**

**It is a brain misfiring its threat detector.**

**You are responding to fear, not betrayal.**

**And that is complex, exhausting work.**

**Be gentle with yourself.**

— Nora Poppins  
LivingWithLewy.net