



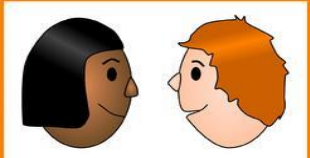
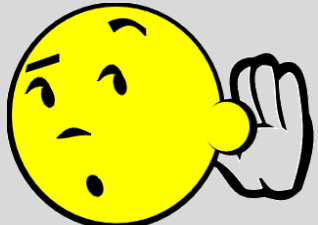


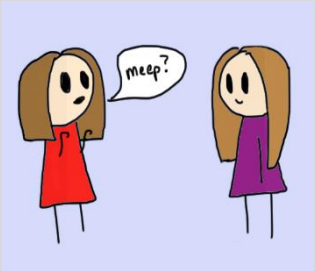

COMMUNICATION

7 steps to effective communication with older people and those who have Dementia

VERSION No	1	
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7 Steps to Effective Communication with Older People and those who have Dementia

		<p><i>When communicating with older adults from time to time, age-related health problems can present a barrier to effective communication. Chronic conditions, such as dementia and hearing loss, as well as the effects of medication can complicate conversations and understanding. During periods of diminished lucidity, interactions can create a frustrating and seemingly helpless experience. However, there are techniques you can use to help facilitate interaction with older adults to create a communication-friendly environment.</i></p>	
1		<p>BE AWARE OF THE PERSON'S HEALTH ISSUES</p>	<p>Older adults may have health problems that add difficulty to speaking and understanding. Be sure you consider the person's health <i>before</i> you engage in communication. For example, they may have hearing problems, speech problems, and memory loss. These factors complicate communication. And remember, chronological age is not always a true indicator of a person's health.</p>
2		<p>BE ATTENTIVE TO THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH YOU ARE COMMUNICATING</p>	<p>Be sure to evaluate the environment in which you are communicating, which might have an effect on hearing and speech problems. Is there any disturbing background noise? Are many people speaking in the same room? Is there any intrusive music? Are there any distractions that could affect your communication? Ask the older adult if the environment is comfortable for them. If you sense any disturbance, try to move to a more peaceful and quiet location.</p>
3	 <p>Make eye-contact with the speaker.</p>	<p>SPEAK CLEARLY, ARTICULATEDLY AND MAKE EYE CONTACT.</p>	<p>Older adults may have trouble hearing. It is important to articulate your words and speak clearly. Direct your speech at the individual's face, not to their side. Do not eat your words: move your mouth and pronounce each word carefully and precisely. When your tongue "dances" inside your mouth when you talk, you articulate more clearly. If your tongue "sleeps" and plays a passive role, you are more likely not articulating as well as you could.</p>
4		<p>ADJUST YOUR VOLUME APPROPRIATELY</p>	<p>There is a difference between enunciating and talking loudly. Learn to adapt your voice to the needs of the individual. Evaluate the environment and how it relates to the person's hearing abilities. Do not shout simply because the listener is older. Treat the individual with respect by articulating and speaking at a comfortable volume that is suitable for both of you.</p>

5		<p>USE CLEAR AND PRECISE QUESTIONS AND SENTENCES</p>	<p>Do not hesitate to repeat or rephrase your sentences and questions if you sense there is an absence of comprehension. Complicated questions and sentences may confuse older adults who have short-term memory or hearing loss. Clear and precise constructions are easier to comprehend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use direct questions: "Did you have soup for lunch?" "Did you have salad for lunch?" Instead of: "What did you have for lunch?" The more precise you are in your language, the less difficulty the elderly have in understanding. Reduce the "noise" in your sentences and questions. Limit your sentences and questions to 20 words or less. Don't use slang or filler words and phrases. (i.e. "Like," "well," and "you know" Keep your sentences brief and direct to the point. <p>Avoid the confusion of mixed ideas and questions. Try to define your ideas and questions logically. If you mix ideas, it may be confusing for the older adult to understand. Express one idea and message at a time. For example, "It is a good idea to call John, your brother. Later, we can call Susan, your sister." A more complicated construction would be: "I think we should call your brother, John, first, and then later we could call your sister, Susan."</p>																					
6	<table border="1" data-bbox="164 987 480 1211"> <tr> <td> I want</td> <td> I see</td> <td> thank you</td> </tr> <tr> <td> drink</td> <td> biscuit</td> <td> apple</td> </tr> <tr> <td> cake</td> <td> crisps</td> <td> banana</td> </tr> <tr> <td> book</td> <td> sand</td> <td> bricks</td> </tr> <tr> <td> pens</td> <td> farm</td> <td> puzzle</td> </tr> <tr> <td> shoe</td> <td> jumper</td> <td> trousers</td> </tr> <tr> <td> coat</td> <td> sock</td> <td> hat</td> </tr> </table>	I want	I see	thank you	drink	biscuit	apple	cake	crisps	banana	book	sand	bricks	pens	farm	puzzle	shoe	jumper	trousers	coat	sock	hat	<p>EMPLOY VISUAL AIDS, IF POSSIBLE.</p>	<p>If an older adult has a hearing or memory problem, it is important to be creative. Visual aids help. Show the individual who or what you are talking about: i.e., it may be better to say, "is there any pain in your back"(pointing to your back)? Is there any pain in your stomach (pointing to your stomach)?" instead of simply asking "Do you have any pain or discomfort?"</p>
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7		<p>TAKE IT SLOW, BE PATIENT AND SMILE</p>	<p>A sincere smile shows that you are understanding. It also creates friendly environment in which to communicate. Remember to pause between sentences and questions. Give the individual an opportunity to understand and digest information and questions, particularly if a person has memory loss. When you pause you show respect and patience.</p>																					